Today's The Herald-Palladium included inside

Brandywine girls roll White Pigeon in season opener
Page B1

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Dowagiac News

Established 1897 • Serving Dowagiac, Sister Lakes and Cassopolis **DECEMBER 13, 2025** leaderpub.com • A publication of The Herald-Palladium **$4**

Santa celebrations

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Greater Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual Candlelight Christmas Parade Friday.

Annual Candlelight Christmas Parade marches through downtown Dowagiac

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — Visitors from across southwest Michigan lined the downtown Dowagiac sidewalks, cup of hot cocoa in hand, in order to experience some homegrown Christmas magic Friday night.

The Greater Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual Candlelight Christmas Parade Friday. Kicking off at 7 p.m., the parade featured dozens of floats and units. Considered one of the largest Christmas parades in southwest Michigan, the Candlelight Christmas Parade featured many floats, including the Miss Dowagiac Court of Honor, Southwestern Michigan College, Santa Claus and many more.

In addition to the parade, visitors to downtown Dowagiac Friday evening frequented stores such as Deck the Halls, Cottage Gallery, Caruso's Candy & Soda Shop and more, which were open late for guests to do some Christmas shopping.

RIGHT: Ernie the alpaca was on hand for Christmas in Cassopolis.

FAR RIGHT: Children could visit with Santa.

Photos by Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Christmas in Cassopolis returns

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CASSOPOLIS — Downtown Cassopolis was brimming with Christmas spirit Friday night as Cassopolis Main Street hosted its annual Christmas in Cassopolis event.

The event was host to an elf scavenger hunt, cookies and hot chocolate, visits with Santa, caroling, a Ranger Jazz Band performance, tree lighting and more.

Popular Sister Lakes Restaurant announces closure

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

SISTER LAKES — Sister Lakes' only lakefront restaurant and bar has closed its doors for good.

Dockside Dining and Drinks, 94376 County Road 690, Dowagiac, announced on Facebook Tuesday the permanent closure of Dockside.

"We'd like to start with expressing our gratitude for the support the community has shown us," the post stated. "This business has challenged in ways we could have not have anticipated and for the sake of our families, we had to make this difficult decision."

Dockside Dining and Drinks, formerly Dockside Dan's, was purchased by Dan LaFond, Alli LaFond and Heather VanAntwerp in 2022. The owners listed the business for sale in February 2024 and were not able to sell to someone interested in keeping the business open. Dockside closed for the season in September and planned to reopen in April before announcing the closure.

"Our decision to put Dockside on the market was two-fold: first, we were looking at how much time we spent managing the business and dealing with its litany of issues and realized that it was time we were missing with our children," Dan said. "Second, we found ourselves trapped in a cycle of debt. We took over mid-summer of 2022 and discovered numerous electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and equipment issues that required immediate and proper remedy. Further, we did not have the revenue of a full summer to sustain the business, so we found ourselves building up debt during the first winter and paying it down in the summer. This cycle of debt chased us throughout our tenure as the owners, so we were never able to realize a profit.

"The restaurant business is especially challenging, and we could not sustain the continued problems of building maintenance and the ever-increasing cost of food."

See **DOCKSIDE**, page A4

Dowagiac joins MPPA as associate member

City council OKs lawn maintenance contract

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — The Dowagiac City Council moved unanimously Monday to pass a resolution requesting associate membership in the Michigan Public Power Agency.

Founded in 1976, the MPPA is an agency that has served public electric utilities for many years and provides services to small and large electric utilities like the city's electric utility. By becoming an associate member, MPPA will primarily provide the city with compliance monitoring and advice.

The membership fee is $1,000. Officials believe associate membership in MPPA will afford the city continued support as it navigates the implementation of new Waste Reduction and Renewal Energy requirements as well as providing the city with resources to help improve overall operations.

"The MPPA represents about 30 communities with electric utilities throughout the state," said City Manager Kevin Anderson. "Instead of us having to hire consulting firms, we, as a member

See **DOWAGIAC**, page A4

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Today's obituaries • Pages A3-A4

Jean Ogden
Kathleen Myer
Ada Phillipson
Eddie Mose Sr.
Johnathon Jankoviak
Chris Jankoviak
James Arnold
Nancy Chadderdon

Inside today's Herald-Palladium

Automotive	C6	Focus	B1	Opinion	B6
Business	C4	Food	B7	Puzzles	B4
Comics	B5	Home & Garden	C7	Television	D3

FRANKLY

Tips and quips

What is Frankly? It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip or a quip? Call Frankly at 269-687-7700 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com.

■ I guess the new rule is Alabama must lose four games before being eliminated from the top 12 in the CFP.

■ I think ND should play their bowl game and run up the score to 100.

■ The Cass County Prosecutor cuts deals to keep his record! He did the same thing with a six time offender who stole my truck. We need a new prosecutor.

■ Why do we keep sending our criminals back to the streets?

■ I haven't seen the prices coming down on food. Did I miss something? Yes, eggs are back to normal after the bird flu, but everything is still way up. I want to shop where the White House shops.

■ It's always a great day when Ohio State loses. Even if Indiana did the dirty work.

■ Make a difference in someone's life this holiday season. A little something goes a long way to brighten a person's day. The holidays can be a time of regret and loneliness.

■ Thank you for shoveling my snow, whoever you are. I really appreciate it.

■ Is it a lost custom or old fashion? No church in Dowagiac displays a nativity scene at Christmas time.

■ My Christmas wish is for these wars to end.

WEATHER

Saturday Night: Snow. Low around 8. Wind chill values as low as -5. Northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80 percent. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

Sunday: Snow likely, mainly before 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 21. Northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 1.

Monday: Partly sunny and cold, with a high near 20.

Monday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 11.

Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 34.

Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 27.

SMC recaps 2025 accomplishments

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — During its last regular meeting of the year Dec. 10, the Southwestern Michigan College Board of Trustees paused to glance back at 2025, before forging ahead into 2026.

"What an incredible year it has been at Southwestern Michigan College," said Interim President Brent Brewer. "While we are thrilled about everything unfolding in 2025," he said, "our attention is already firmly set on 2026 and the years that follow to sustain this. Continued progress will require careful planning, bold action and shared commitment from our entire community. In the coming weeks we'll begin working on the 2026-28 strategic plan. Our current plan ends June 30.

"Thank you, Board of Trustees, for your unwavering dedication and commitment to the college over this past year," Brewer said. "Your steadfast support has been instrumental in making these accomplishments possible. I'm grateful for your leadership and partnership as we continue advancing the mission of Southwestern Michigan College."

"It's inspiring to see the breadth of progress and accomplishments," which Brewer narrowed to 10 "impactful events":

10. SMC's Todd Hesson, named NWCA National Wrestling Coach of the Year.

9. On May 13 Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department in conjunction with Michigan Works! and SMC held the inaugural MiCareerQuest Cass County, exposing 900 Cass and Van Buren counties ninth graders from 13 schools to the world of work.

8. SMC's spring enrollment increased 4.1 percent – marking the sixth straight semester of positive numbers.

7. SMC and Western Michigan University inked agreements in psychology, social work and social science.

6. Bristol Community College President Dr. Sedgwick L. Harris, an SMC alumnus from Fall River, Mass., and 1st Source Foundation were honored at the second annual Founders Day.

5. An economic impact study found that the college generates more than $58 million annually for Cass County, and more than $224 million for the surrounding region.

4. SMC announced construction of a new wrestling facility, a performing arts upgrade to band and choir facilities and a Room to Grow capital campaign.

3. SMC criminal justice students swept SkillsUSA-Michigan again in April in Grand Rapids with two gold medals, one silver medal and one bronze medal.

2. SMC captured Leader Publications' Best of the Best college in southwest Michigan category.

1. This fall, SMC achieved its fourth straight year of fall enrollment growth.

"These moments reflect not only our achievements," Brewer said, "but also the dedication and the collaboration that drive SMC forward. They remind us of the strength of our students, faculty and staff and the momentum that we're carrying into the year ahead. I'm excited to keep building on these successes as we move into 2026 with confidence and purpose."

Nick Mustak of Elkhart accepted a 15-year service pin from Trustee Skip Dyes.

Chief Academic and Assurance Officer Dr. Jeff Freels introduced Mustak, who has been part of the Institutional Research team during his time at SMC.

"Before coming to SMC, Nick worked primarily in the RV and boating industries in Elkhart, including accounting, marketing and warehouse operations," Freels said.

Mustak holds a bachelor's degree in business administration he completed through Indiana University in 1996 while working full-time. His wife, Judy, is also employed at SMC. They have two sons, two daughters-in-law and a granddaughter.

Director of Campus Life Branden Pompey of Dowagiac earned his 10-year pin presented by Vice Chairman Tracy Hertsel.

Vice President for the Student Experience Dr. Katie Hannah introduced Pompey, who as a student earned an associate degree in theatre before transferring to Grand Valley State University for his bachelor's degree in theatre.

Photo provided
Director of Campus Life Branden Pompey of Dowagiac earned his 10-year pin presented by Trustee Skip Dyes.

He has worked in Campus Life for the entirety of his tenure, developing and implementing programs such as Welcome Week, Grady Scholars, Leadership SMC and year-round student-engagement events and initiatives to provide a total college experience.

Pompey, who also holds a Michigan State University master's degree, serves on several state boards. He is vice president of the Student Life Association for Michigan Community Colleges, liaison to the Michigan Community College Student Services Association (MCCSSA) and MCCSSA's liaison to the Professional Associations Leadership Alliance (PALA).

"He impacts not just things happening at SMC, but across the state in Campus Life," Hannah said.

In other business, trustees accepted five donations to the college totaling $1,026 and acknowledged three gifts to the SMC Foundation amounting to $6,600.

The board also adopted its 2026 meeting schedule of second Wednesdays at 8 a.m.: Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 11 and Dec. 9. Trustees do not meet in July. November's meeting takes place at the Niles campus.

LMC to form new Student Success Center

College awarded $650K grant to launch initiative

By HP STAFF

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Lake Michigan College has been awarded a $650,000 grant to establish a Student Success Center in an effort to transform how the college supports students from enrollment through graduation.

According to a news release, the MiLeap College Success Grant was awarded through the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential (MiLEAP).

"This grant allows us to fundamentally reimagine how we connect students to the resources they need to succeed," LMC President Trevor Kubatzke said in the release. "Too many students struggle not because they lack ability, but because they lack access to or awareness of available help, lack a clear academic or career plan, and feel disconnected from institutional resources."

The Student Success Center represents a strategic response to critical challenges identified through qualitative and quantitative data analysis, including needed student support experiences, and equity gaps in retention and completion rates. By centralizing support services into one student-centered hub, Kubatzke said the initiative will integrate academic advising, success coaching, wellness services and basic needs insecurity supports.

The center will address these barriers through several key components.

Academic advisors, success coaches and student support specialists will work collaboratively to ensure students receive personalized guidance that adapts to their individual needs.

Rather than waiting for students to seek help, the center will use early alert systems and data analytics to identify students who may be struggling and connect them with appropriate interventions.

A structured assessment tool will guide advising and coaching caseloads, ensuring consistent, high-quality support for all students.

Beyond academics, the center will help students navigate wellness resources and basic needs support.

The initiative builds on extensive research and institutional data, including student surveys, focus groups, CARE Team insights, and stop-out and retention analysis. According to the release, this approach aligns with institutional strategic pillars of academic excellence and student success.

"The Student Success Center will allow us to walk alongside students from the moment they consider enrolling until the day they complete their goals," said Leslie Navarro, associate dean of student success and well-being, in the release. "By bringing advising, success coaching, wellness, and basic needs support together in one place, we can respond more quickly, build stronger relationships, and remove barriers that too often derail students' progress."

Planning for the center will begin this spring, and LMC officials anticipate this coordinated approach will improve student engagement, planning and success outcomes.

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Johnathon Jankoviak

August 2, 2011 – December 8, 2025

Johnathon Michael Jankoviak, 14, of Niles, died December 8, 2025 following an automobile accident.

He was the fourth of six children born to Chris and Mandy Jankoviak on August 2, 2011. Johnny Boy. Johnny lived big. His curly blond hair, large frame and huge hands were as big as his personality. He will be remembered for his contagious smile and overflowing joy. Johnny loved Jesus and he loved people. Johnny and his siblings were homeschooled and best friends. He spent his time volunteering with the children in church and investing in friendships. He was competitive and passionate about all sports. He loved fishing, swimming, baseball, basketball, pickleball and football. Johnny was a hard worker and enjoyed taking care of his animals and getting his hands dirty. Everyone who knew Johnny loved Johnny.

Johnny will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his mother, Mandy Jankoviak of Niles; his favorite sister, Ellesyn Mary Kay Jankoviak of Niles; four brothers, Nolyn Wayne (Gracie) Jankoviak of Cheyenne Wyoming, Archer Taden Jankoviak of Niles, Boaz Christopher Jankoviak of Niles, Benson Mathias Jankoviak of Niles; grandparents, Kathleen Jankoviak of Niles, Mike and Judy Holtgren of Niles; seven Aunts, Cynthia Ann (Larry) Cashier of Niles, Constance Joan Jankoviak of Niles, Tricia Marie (Jeremy) Applegate of Florida, Rebecca Sue (Josh) Asmus of Niles, Monica Ruth (Matt) Moore of Niles, Karri Michelle (Matt) Sterling of Niles, Debra Nicole (Aaron) Weise of Niles; nine uncles, Jon James (Toni) Jankoviak of Dowagiac, David Moses Jankoviak of Niles, Daniel Matthew (Keyna) Jankoviak of Niles, Andrew Paul Jankoviak of Niles, Nicholas Gerard (Christina) Jankoviak of Arkansas, Jeremy Francis (Alison) Jankoviak of Edwardsburg, Jerald Matthew (Alma) Holtgren of Niles, John Martin (Amy) Holtgren of Manistee, Shawn Michael (Katie) Holtgren of Osceola and numerous cousins, who he treasured dearly!

He was preceded in death by his grandfather, Jon Jankoviak and his father Chris Jankoviak.

Family and friends will gather in Summit Church 1700 West River Road, Niles on Sunday, December 14, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. His service will be held at Bethel University in the Everest -Rohrer Fine Arts Center, 1001 Bethel Circle Drive Mishawaka, Indiana 46545, Monday, December 15, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. with Pastor Dan Miller officiating.

Johnny will be laid to rest in Silverbrook Cemetery alongside his father at a later date. Contributions in memory of Johnny may be made to LifePlan, 527 East Main Street, Niles, Michigan 49120 or to the Jankoviak Family via the Benevolence Fund, Faith of Life Church, account #9180, at any United Federal Credit Union.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Christopher Jankoviak

June 27, 1968 – December 6, 2025

Christopher Joseph Jankoviak, 57, of Niles, died suddenly in an automobile accident, December 6, 2025.

His life began June 27, 1968 in Niles, the fifth of fourteen children, born to Jon Donald and Kathleen Joan Jankoviak. He married Mandy Lynne Holtgren on June 26, 2010. She survives.

Chris graduated from First Assembly Christian Schools in 1986. He then went on to Trinity Bible College and graduated from Bethel College. Chris worked at New Age Telecom with an amazing team. His priorities were Jesus, Mandy, kids and church. Chris lived a life that shined for Jesus. It showed through how he lived and preached the Gospel throughout the area. Chris and Mandy shared a story that could only have been orchestrated by God and a love that lives on through their children. El was daddy's girl and each boy felt uniquely known and loved. Chris was known as a quiet man until he started to talk about God. His passion for Christ was undeniable; he was a man after God's own heart. Chris will be greatly missed by family and friends.

He is survived by his wife, Mandy Jankoviak of Niles; his favorite daughter, Ellesyn Mary Kay Jankoviak of Niles; five sons, Nolyn Wayne (Gracie) Jankoviak of Cheyenne Wyoming, Archer Taden Jankoviak of Niles, Johnathon Michael Jankoviak (who joined his dad in heaven), Boaz Christopher Jankoviak of Niles, Benson Mathias Jankoviak of Niles; mother, Kathleen Jankoviak of Niles; seven sisters, Cynthia Ann (Larry) Cashier of Niles, Constance Joan Jankoviak of Niles, Tricia Marie (Jeremy) Applegate of Florida, Rebecca Sue (Josh) Asmus of Niles, Monica Ruth (Matt) Moore of Niles, Karri Michelle (Matt) Sterling of Niles, Debra Nicole (Aaron) Weise of Niles; six brothers, Jon James (Toni) Jankoviak of Dowagiac, David Moses Jankoviak of Niles, Daniel Matthew (Keyna) Jankoviak of Niles, Andrew Paul Jankoviak of Niles, Nicholas Gerard (Christina) Jankoviak of Arkansas, Jeremy Francis (Alison) Jankoviak of Edwardsburg and numerous nieces and nephews!

He was preceded in death by his father Jon Donald Jankoviak.

Family and friends will gather in Summit Church 1700 West River Road, Niles on Sunday, December 14, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. His service will be held at Bethel University in the Everest -Rohrer Fine Arts Center, 1001 Bethel Circle Drive Mishawaka, Indiana 46545, Monday, December 15, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. with Pastor Dan Miller officiating. Chris will be laid to rest in Silverbrook Cemetery alongside his son Johnny at a later date. Contributions in memory of Christopher may be made to LifePlan, 527 East Main Street, Niles, Michigan 49120 or to the Jankoviak Family via the Benevolence Fund, Faith of Life Church, account #9180, at any United Federal Credit Union.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Ada Phillipson

April 23, 1933 – November 30, 2025

Ada Eve Phillipson (Eve), 92, passed away on November 30, 2025, at Sunrise Assisted Living in Edina, Minnesota.

Eve was born April 23, 1933, in Cleveland, Ohio. She was the daughter of Zoltan & Ada (Hackl) Sztankay. Eve's father, Zoltan Sztankay, was a Hungarian Diplomat and later became a political science professor at Valparaiso University. Because of her father's work, Eve spent her childhood in the United States and different European countries. Eve and her brother, Zoltan, were dual citizens of the United States and Hungary.

The family moved to the United States permanently after World War II and Eve's parents became United States citizens. The family settled in Valparaiso, Indiana when Eve was 15 years old.

Eve received her bachelor's degree from Valparaiso University, and married John Alton Williamson, a navy veteran from West Virginia. They had three children: John, Claudia, and Jim. Eve completed her master's degree in education from Valparaiso University in 1968. Eve enjoyed teaching first grade in Hobart, Indiana for 30 years.

Eve and John Williamson divorced in 1979. In 1981 Eve met Herbert E. Phillipson Jr. in South Bend at a Parents Without Partners dance. They danced all night together, immediately falling in love. They were married two months later, on July 5, 1981, in Dowagiac, Michigan. Herb Phillipson was Cass County Prosecutor, later serving as Cass County Juvenile and Probate Judge.

Herb was widowed from his first marriage to Dorothy Phillipson and they had three children: Richard, Jane, and Thomas. Besides their six children, Eve and Herb were also exchange student parents to Mario Marzani of Bergamo, Italy.

Eve and Herb were married for 29 years. They were enthusiastic travelers, sojourning to many different countries, always enjoying meeting people and experiencing each country's unique nature and culture. Eve and Herb were both avid gardeners and their Dowagiac home was always a gathering place for their family and many friends. Eve loved her family and being part of the Dowagiac community. She was a member of Alpha Upsilon Master chapter of Beta Sigma Phi sorority. She also enjoyed art, pottery, music, history, politics, nature, walking, reading and spending time with all her children and grandchildren.

Her loving family included her husband, Herbert Phillipson of Dowagiac 12/25/1923 – 09/27/2010; brother, Zoltan Sztankay and his wife Anda Sztankay; children John (Sue) Williamson of St Louis, MO, Claudia Callaghan of Minneapolis, MN, Jim Zoltan (Mina) Williamson of Fontana, CA, Richard (Anne Marie) Phillipson of Tucson, AZ, Jane Phillipson Wilson of Dowagiac, MI, Thomas (Margaret) Phillipson of Kalamazoo, MI, Mario Marzani and his wife Fiorenza of Bergamo, Italy; grandchildren, Zoltan Callaghan, Sara Callaghan, Orion Callaghan, James Williamson, Kate (Ivan) Frederick, Zoltan Williamson, Michelle Williamson, Kea Wilson, Rich Phillipson, Emma Phillipson; and great-grandchildren, Sylvie, Athena, and Shelby. Eve had the joy of meeting her newest great-granddaughter, Grace Frederick, shortly before her passing.

A private family graveside service will be held in Riverside Cemetery, Dowagiac, where Eve and Herb will be laid to rest together. A service to celebrate Eve's life with family and friends will be held on April 23, 2026, in Dowagiac. April 23rd is Eve's birthday.

Arrangements were entrusted to Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, Dowagiac. To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Eve's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Jean Ogden

September 17, 1930 – December 4, 2025

Jean Shirley "Jeanie" Ogden, age 95 of Niles, Michigan, mother, grandmother, sister, devout follower and witness of Jesus Christ, missions volunteer, and prayer warrior, died peacefully on Thursday, December 4, 2025, with her family gathered around at her home.

She was born on September 17, 1930, in Saint Joseph, Missouri, to Roy C. and Ruth (Sowter) Lawson, and graduated in 1948 from Central High School in Saint Joseph. She continued her education at Platt College of Commerce and Secretarial Training in Saint Joseph.

She married the love of her life, Earl D. Ogden, on July 1, 1955, at Wyatt Park Christian Church in Saint Joseph. Together, they moved to Okmulgee, Oklahoma, where Earl enrolled at Oklahoma A&M Tech, and Jeanie took a secretarial position at the college and worked in the office of Born Engineering. After graduation, they moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and Fort Wayne, Indiana, before settling in Niles in 1972, where she was employed in the office of Trinity Episcopal Church.

Jeanie was a long-time, active member of the former First Missionary Church in Niles (now Summit Church) and had recently attended Community Evangelical Free Church with her daughter. She volunteered for 25 years as a teacher for Child Evangelism Fellowship in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Niles. Beginning in 1994, she and Earl spent most of their Januarys and Februarys traveling and volunteering at Christian mission stations including Project Teamwork in Homestead, Florida, East European Harvest in Mobile, Alabama, the Saint Petersburg, Russia and Southwest Texas stations of the World Partners of the Missionary Church, Bible Study Fellowship in San Antonio, Texas, Horn Creek Conference Grounds, a high mountain Christian Family camp in Westcliffe, Colorado, and Child Evangelism Fellowship in Warrenton, Missouri and Berrien Center, Michigan. They also volunteered for many years at Samaritan's Purse headquarters, processing the gift-filled shoeboxes of Operation Christmas Child.

At home, Jeanie was a talented seamstress, creating clothing for her family, and eventually teddy bears and blankets for her grandchildren. That creativity carried into the kitchen, where she tried a new meal every week – usually successfully. She enjoyed sharing her home with friends, sometimes for meals and table games, but more often for her longstanding Wednesday Bible Study, which met there just two weeks ago, and she maintained a regular schedule of hour-long telephone call prayer sessions.

Her family brought her great joy, including gatherings that required extra tables to seat everyone for dinner. She and Earl made the grandchildren's summers special, including many out-of-state trips to fascinating destinations. Jeanie and Earl celebrated the remarkable fifty-seventh anniversary of their wedding several months before his death on May 11, 2013.

They were sadly preceded in death by an infant grandson, Adam Brelowski, on October 12, 1995.

Surviving family includes her children, Christina Nimtz, Nancy (& David) Brelowski, and Dan (& Teresa) Perry, all of Niles; grandchildren, Zackry (& Libby) Nimtz, Michael Brelowski, Matthew Brelowski, Luke (& Jenny Hrncir) Brelowski, Joshua (& Danielle Kuemin) Perry, Jeni (& Jeramie) Creekmore, Joel (& Sarah Martin) Perry, and Betsy (& Richard) Salvagni; great-grandchildren, Willow, Hazel, Lawson, Briar, Kiya, Kloe, Piper, Paisleigh, Hailey, Lyrec, Tobias, Lincoln, Sarah, Deklynn, Mira, Gia, Briella, Amber, and Alexandra; Jeanie's brother, Neal (& Arla) Lawson of South Carolina, and many nieces and nephews.

The family of Jeanie Ogden will receive relatives and friends on Thursday, December 11, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. until Noon at Summit Church, 1700 West River Road, in Niles, followed by a Memorial Service beginning at Noon on Thursday, with Summit's Lead Pastor Dan Miller, officiating. The family will gather earlier for a private Committal Service at Silverbrook Cemetery in Niles.

Contributions in memory of Jeanie may be made to Operation Christmas Child at Samaritan's Purse, PO Box 3000, Boone, North Carolina, 28607.

Arrangements were completed at the Halbritter-Wickens Funeral Home, 615 East Main Street in Niles. Memories and condolences may be left at: www.halbritterwickens.com.

Jeanie's home reflected her life, decorated in the orderly fashion of the Victorian Style, every surface filled with objects that indicated her interests: souvenirs from her travels, Christian artwork, and her cherished family heirlooms and photographs. Her home was also filled with chairs for all her guests and family, whether for board games, Bible study, a cup of coffee, or a family holiday celebration. All of this indicates a long and devoted life, fulfilling the commandment to love God and love one another.

Nancy J. Chadderdon

January 17, 1948 – December 9, 2025

Nancy J. Chadderdon, age 77, of Tecumseh, MI passed away at home on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, under the care of Hospice of Lenawee with her husband at her side.

She was born on January 17, 1948 in Niles, Michigan to the late William E. and Mary E. (Austin) Gilbert, and was the oldest of three children. She was a 1966 graduate of Niles High School.

On May 23, 1970, she married Dale L. Chadderdon, and he survives.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her sister, Linda K. Gustafson, and her nephew, O'Rion Gilbert. She is survived by her nieces and nephew, Mary Kay (Allan) Brown of St. Charles, IL, Andy Gustafson of St. Joseph, MI and Reanna Gilbert of Niles, MI. She is also survived by four grand-nephews and one grand-niece.

Nancy was always extremely supportive of Dale's career and music hobby. As they had no children of their own, she concentrated on being the best Aunt that she could be, doing her best to spoil her nieces and nephews, and later, her grand-niece and grand-nephews. She was a babysitter for a select few children over the years, and worked in retail at various times in her life, most notably at the August Company when it was owned by John and Phil. She was previously an active member of the Tecumseh Service Club for 25 years.

Nancy followed in her mother's footsteps in a number of ways. She was a strong-willed person with a kind and generous heart. She was an outstanding cook, and always took care of the less fortunate. She shared freely of her talents, and enjoyed counted cross stitch and crocheting. She will be missed by all.

At Nancy's request, cremation has taken place, and no memorial service is planned. Memorial contributions in honor of Nancy may be made to the Tecumseh Service Club or to Hospice of Lenawee.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.handlerfuneralhomes.com.

Kathleen Myer

December 30, 1949 – December 6, 2025

Kathleen Irene Myer, 75, of Niles, died peacefully Saturday, December 6, 2025

Her life began December 30, 1949 in Niles, born to Robert and Irene Leamon.

Kathy graduated from Niles High School in 1968. She worked at Simplicity Pattern. She later found her true joy in taking care of her grandchildren and many others that called her Grandma Kathy. Her passion was being involved in her family's lives. Grandma Kathy never missed any of her grandchildren's events, taking pride in making treats for the teammates and families involved.

Kathy enjoyed baking, canning, crocheting, playing card games and most of all, going to the casino with her sister.

Kathy will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by one daughter, Tammie (Shawn) Herrman of Buchanan; one son, Dale (Tara) Myer of Niles; five grandchildren, Kylee (Troy) Higgins of Utah, Jaycee Myer of Niles, Lane Herrman of Buchanan, Aynslee Myer of Niles, Lexi Herrman of Buchanan; one sister, Martha Ann Virgil of Niles; and nephew and niece, Obi and Rose Myer and other nieces, nephews, cousins and many others that called her Grandma Kathy.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother Robert Leamon II.

Family and friends will gather Friday, December 12, 2025 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles, with a short service at 6:00 p.m. Kathy will be laid to rest in Mission Hills Memorial Gardens at a later date.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Kathy be made to Cass County Medical Care Facility, 23770 Hospital St, Cassopolis, MI 49031.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

See more obituaries on page A4

Obituary policy

Leader Publications publishes death notices at a cost of $15. Extended obituaries are priced based on character count. If there's an error because of a mistake made by the newspaper, the obituary will be reprinted at no charge. For more information, or to submit an obituary, email obits@leaderpub.com.

Cass County Problem-Solving/ Treatment Courts awarded $420,149 in grants from state

SUBMITTED

CASSOPOLIS — Cass County Problem-Solving/Treatment Courts have received $420,149 in the following grant awards from the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) for fiscal year 2026, October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, Chief Judge Carol Montavon Bealor announced:

■ $118,784 for the Adult Treatment/Sobriety Court (Hon. Stacey A. Rentfrow)

■ $153,470 for the Cass County Mental Health Court (Hon. Mark A. Herman)

■ $67,206 for the Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program (Hon. Mark A. Herman)

■ $80,689 for the Family Treatment Court (Hon. Carol Montavon Bealor)

"We are appreciative of the continued grant funding and support from SCAO for our problem-solving courts," Chief Judge Bealor said. "Each of our treatment court programs uses evidence-based practices to combine supervision, monitoring, and treatment to address the underlying causes that brought participants before the Courts. This approach has been proven to not only reduce recidivism but also allows participants to positively engage with community supports that can help them maintain their sobriety once they graduate from the program."

As of September 30, 2025, Michigan had a total of 137 Drug/Sobriety Courts, 41 Mental Health Courts, and 29 Veterans Treatment Courts. Of the 137 Drug/Sobriety Courts, 9 are Family Dependency Courts.

To learn more about problem-solving courts and the difference they are making throughout the State of Michigan, check out information on the Michigan Supreme Court's website at: https://www.courts.michigan.gov/administration/court-programs/problem-solving-courts/

MSU Extension hosts Horticultural Days on Feb. 4-5 at Lake Michigan College

By PMG STAFF

BENTON TOWNSHIP — The 2026 Southwest Michigan Horticultural Days will be held Feb. 4-5 at Lake Michigan College's Mendel Center in Benton Township.

According to a news release, it is organized each year by the Michigan Grape Society and Michigan State University Extension.

These two days of educational sessions will cover general information, smart farm/precision agriculture, and pesticide regulations and compliance topics on Day 1, and then Day 2 will cover topics on juice and wine grapes, blueberries, strawberries and raspberries, as well as tree fruit. MSU Extension educators and outside experts will provide informative talks and answer questions in the educational sessions.

Registration and the trade show begin at 8 a.m. and the educational sessions start at 9 a.m. on both days. A wine showcase free for all attendees will be held Feb. 4.

Pre-registration for both days is $60 per person, postmarked before Jan. 16, 2026. Registrations for both days postmarked after Jan. 16, 2026, online and at the door, will be $75 per person. Single-day registrations are available for a $15 discount off the full-event registration price.

Anyone with questions regarding registration may contact Renee Tinkey at 269-944-1477, ext. 201, or by emailing tinkeyre@msu.edu.

Checks should be made payable to Michigan Grape Society. They can be mailed to MSU-SWMREC, 1791 Hillandale Road, Benton Harbor, MI 49022, Attn: Renee Tinkey.

Visit michigangrapesociety.simpletix.com to register online with credit card payment or to access a registration form to mail in with a check payment.

DOWAGIAC

From page A1

municipality, share that cost throughout the state. This was formalizing a relationship. We have worked with them and they've helped us with some of these things in the past. Membership opens the door for us down the road to potentially join with other people to buy power or other major things. They have been very helpful in providing ordinances and updates on upcoming legislation that would impact us."

In other business, council approved the quote from Affordable Lawn Care Solutions to provide Lawn Maintenance Services from 2026-2030 at a cost of $836,125 total.

The city completed a request for proposals for lawn maintenance services for city-owned properties for a five-year term from 2026-2030. RFP was posted on November 6th with responses due by December 3rd. The city received three proposals, with the lowest bidder being Affordance Lawn Care Solutions.

"We go out to bid every five years on this contract," Anderson said. "ClearCut had been doing it for a while, and I know the owner was looking to phase into retirement. We received three bids, and Affordable Lawn Care was the most cost-effective for us over that five-year window."

Following the meeting, council members had the opportunity to tour the recently completed Department of Public Works Facilities at 302 Wolf St. In September 2023, the council approved design and financing plans to construct a new fire station and rehab the former fire station to become the new home for the Department of Public Services. The plan created new headquarters suited to each department's needs while freeing up space required for the South Front Street Renovation Project.

"We had old buildings there where Public Works was housed," Anderson said. "We wanted to prep that area so we could clean up the waterfront and see some development. Building a new fire station and moving the fire department into it made the most sense. The old fire station, which was originally a DOT building decades ago, was restored to its Public Works function."

Assistant City Manager Amanda Sleigh said the renovated facility is able to house both the administrative and maintenance functions of the Public Works under one roof.

"This was done to improve efficiency and collaboration in that department," she said. "We remodeled and now have a wonderful office space, a conference room and a large break room. We also added a three-bay pole barn to the property that houses our mechanic with our sewer truck and we have a wash bay out there."

"We are excited about the project overall because it was a very cost-effective way to do that," Anderson added. "The bay area where all the equipment is stored was able to be reused almost as is, with some paint and cleanup. We added some storage areas. We are very excited because the salt bin is there. We used to have to move equipment over for the winter. Having everything under one roof, as Amanda said, gets to an efficiency piece that we are looking forward to good results from over the long haul."

DOCKSIDE

From page A1

Ownership signed a contract to sell the land, which does not include the business assets. Dockside will be selling the equipment, furniture, fixtures and liquor license in the coming weeks.

"Though there are many great places to have dinner and a drink at the lakes, we know that Dockside will be missed."

While sad to announce the closure of Dockside, the Lafonds look forward to continuing to serve the Dowagiac community with their other venture, Driftwood Summer Shop.

"We did not make this decision lightly or quickly, but it is the best decision for our family," Dan said. "Though we were discouraged by our experience with Dockside, we have had incredible success with Driftwood Summer Shop. My wife and I will continue to serve the Sister Lakes community as the owners of Driftwood for many years to come."

OBITUARIES

James 'Jim' Arnold

August 11, 1944 – December 9, 2025

James "Jim" Arnold, a beloved husband, father, papa, brother, coach, and friend, passed away peacefully on December 9, 2025, due to natural causes.

Born on August 11, 1944, in Benton Harbor, Michigan, he was a pillar in his community, known for his loving, selfless, and generous spirit. Jim's early life in Benton Harbor laid the foundation for a lifetime of dedication to others.

He was the cherished son of the late Edmund and Esther (Bisnett) Arnold and grew up alongside his sister, Virginia Haffner, currently of Lebanon, Ohio. After graduating from Benton Harbor High School, Jim's passion for education led him to Andrews University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in education.

On September 8, 1966, Jim married his high school sweetheart, Linda J. Gathright, in a heartfelt ceremony in Benton Harbor. Their union was a testament to enduring love, celebrated for over fifty-nine years. The couple was blessed with two daughters, Sonya (Jody) Martinez of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Allison (Jefferson) Clay of South Bend. They, along with their mother, Linda (Gathright) Arnold of Niles, survive him. Jim's legacy includes four granddaughters, all of whom he adored, as well as a great-grandchild on the way; Hannah (Derek) Orndorff, Alexi (Jonathan) Mpanzu, Josalyn (Kade) Vander Molen, and Abbie Clay.

Jim's vocational journey was marked by a thirty-eight-year tenure with Niles Community Schools, where he was revered as a coach, teacher, and mentor. His influence extended beyond the classroom as he touched the lives of countless student athletes on the basketball court, softball field, and in track & field. Even in his leisure, he found joy in painting houses during summer breaks.

A devout Christian, Jim was deeply involved in his faith community. He was a long-standing member of First Baptist Church in Niles, serving as an usher and trustee. In later years, he was a member of St. Mark Missionary Church in Mishawaka, Indiana, where his presence was a blessing to many.

Jim's interests were as diverse as they were passionate. He coached various sports, including girls' basketball, softball, boys' basketball, and track and field. His love for running and fitness were paralleled only by his enthusiasm for collecting sports memorabilia. As an avid sports fan, he cheered wholeheartedly for the Detroit Lions, University of Michigan football and basketball, Chicago White Sox, and the Boston Celtics. Yet, above all, his faith and family remained the cornerstones of his life.

A time of visitation will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at Brown Funeral Home in Niles. Funeral services will be Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 12:30 p.m. at St. Mark Missionary Church located at 55240 Bittersweet Rd., Mishawaka, Indiana 46545. A private interment will be held at Silverbrook Cemetery in Niles, Michigan.

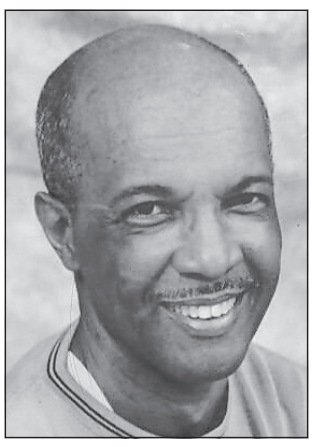
In keeping with Jim's passion for education, a scholarship is being established in his honor. Memorial contributions to this may be made to Brown Funeral Home at 521 E. Main Street, Niles, Michigan 49120.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com.

Jim Arnold was a man of great integrity, whose impact on the world was as profound as it was heartfelt. His influence as a coach and educator will live on in the many lives he helped shape. He will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and the community he so faithfully served. Jim's life was a testament to the power of kindness, dedication, and the enduring strength of love. His memory will be cherished and kept alive by all who had the privilege to know him.

Eddie Mose Sr.

August 1, 1944 – December 7, 2025



Psalms 34-1 – Eddie James Mose Sr. praised his way into heaven on December 7, 2025, at his home with his loved one's praise, too.

Eddie James Mose was born to Doc Mose Jr. and Jessie Lee Thomas on August 1, 1944, in Gosport, Alabama. He grew up in Mobile, Alabama until he was fifteen years of age, when he moved to Cassopolis, Michigan and made his home with his cousin and her family, where he learned masonry and later built his home.

Eddie graduated from Cassopolis High school in 1962 and was a forever Ranger fan. After he served honorably in the U.S. Navy. He returned to Cassopolis and worked at Clark and Carpenter, from which he retired – twice – finally in 2019.

Eddie's life was a testament to his unwavering love for his family and his passion for forgiveness and his dedication to his church and community. He was a Deacon at First Baptist Church of Vandalia, by way of Community Baptist Church. Family was the cornerstone of his life. He was a husband to Helen (Lee) Mose for forty-nine years, a loving father to Eddie Mose Jr., Katina (Adrian) Clabin, and Diriki Mose. His role model extended with grace and joy to his grandchildren, Nicolas Davis, D'Lan Mose, Ky'ana Buck, Imani Brown, Ky'ante Buck, Akira Mose and Zaire Mose. Eddie's love for his grandchildren knew no bounds. He also celebrated with his great-grandchildren, Adam Quinn, Corbin Davis, Trace Davis and Kalon Buck. Eddie extended his love to his in-law, Lucienne Lee, James (Nora) Lee, Betty Ash, Bea Lee Shirley Lee, Jimmy (Cindy) Lee, and David Lee, all of whom will together hold dear the memories of his laughter. His presence in the lives of his sister's children was a source of comfort and joy that were like his siblings, Willam Joe Smith, Lonnie (Victoria) Smith, Daren (Cassandra) Smith and Jan Smith. Eddie's presence was also a source of comfort and joy to his longtime friends since childhood, his Navy buddies, Lee nieces and nephews, and cousins and friends.

Those gone on before whom he loved were his father, Doc Mose Jr, his sweet mother Jessie Lee Thomas, his wonderful sister Emma Smith, and daughter Kimberly Louise Lee that he missed daily.

As we bid a "See you later" to Eddie the husband, Eddie the dad, pops, Eddie the Papa, Granddad, pop-pop, Eddie the uncle, brother-in-law, the confidant, classmate, Navy buddy, ex-worker, Whatever his relationship was to you, you have received these things from your relationship with him: Ephesians 4:31-32.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, December 13, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. in Pleasant View Church of Christ, 60550 Crooked Creed Road (corner of M-60), Cassopolis with his pastor, the Reverend Michael Anderson of First Baptist Church of Vandalia officiating. The Honor Guard of Lt. William E. Lozier VFW Post 10704, Cassopolis, of which Eddie was an active member, along with members of the U.S. Navy will accord Eddie Military Honors following the service.

Eddie will be laid to rest in a private family ceremony in Mission Hills Memorial Gardens in Sumnerville.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

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OPINION

WRITE US

Here's how to submit a letter to the editor:
Email: news@leaderpub.com
Regular mail: Editorial Page, Leader Publications, 25 N. 2nd St., Niles MI 49120

All letters should include a daytime telephone number and street address for verification. Letters must be 500 words or fewer. Leader Publications reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, grammar, inappropriate content and libel.

Why do I buy ingredients I'll only use once?

By DANIEL NEMAN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch (TNS)

Do you ever do this? I just bought a bunch of ingredients for one meal that I will never, ever use again.

I had gone to Costco, looking to buy a leg of lamb. Costco is my favorite purveyor of lamb, which is actually kind of sad, but it is inexpensive and it is good quality and they always have it.

They didn't have it. But they did have oxtails, which are the culinary equivalent of legs of lamb if you kind of squint and you aren't talking about the taste. So I bought the oxtails.

I had only made oxtails once before, for a story about soul food. That particular recipe was for Southern Smothered Oxtails. The slow-cooked oxtails were great, but the smothered part was a little too gloppy for my taste.

I looked through my collection of cookbooks looking for oxtail recipes that were relatively glop-free. It turns out that although I have a couple of hundred cookbooks, only a handful include recipes for oxtails. And most of those did not inspire me.

I turned to "The New Larousse Gastronomique," the last word on cooking absolutely everything. Naturally, it had a recipe for oxtails. The recipe included this sentence: "Put in a stockpot with 2 pig's trotters, cut into pieces, and a whole pig's ear."

I decided instead to look for an Asian recipe and found a promising one in "Complete Chinese Cookbook" by Ken Hom. The problem was that I did not have several of the ingredients. A bigger problem was that I felt compelled to buy several of those ingredients to make the dish the way Hom intended.

Fortunately, I live near an international market. Unfortunately, that means I could easily buy all these things in jars that I will not possibly use again.

Like red-fermented soybean curd. I went to the store and bought a jar of red-fermented soybean curd. I didn't get the white-fermented soybean curd, because that would be completely wrong, and I didn't get the chili-fermented soybean curd because I wanted my wife to be able to enjoy the oxtails and she doesn't like spicy food.

I also bought a jar of yellow soybean paste, making sure I did not mistakenly purchase dry yellow soybean paste.

Red-fermented soybean curd has a strong but pleasant taste of umami, the full-bodied earthiness found in mushrooms or meat broth. Yellow soybean paste is also basically umami, but with a hint of sweetness to it.

Both are used in many different ways in Chinese cooking, but let's be real: Both are destined to sit unnoticed in the back of the refrigerator until they become crusted over with unidentifiable brown goo and are unceremoniously thrown away.

They weren't particularly expensive, but they weren't free, either.

I needed star anise as well, so I bought a too-large bag of it. But star anise is dried and will remain pungent and flavorful for years. I wouldn't be surprised if I end up eventually using as much as half of the bag, which in some ways is a victory.

I was out of hoisin sauce, which is liberally used in the recipe, so I bought a jar of it, too. Hoisin is vaguely like a barbecue sauce, and I use it often enough that I run out of it, so I didn't end up resenting the fact that I had to buy more.

I had also run out of five-spice powder, but that wasn't a problem because I had the ingredients to make my own (fennel seeds, cloves, Szechuan peppercorns, the star anise I had just bought – all of which I lightly toasted on the stove to bring out their flavor – and cinnamon). Happily, making it myself saved a couple of bucks.

One last ingredient was dark soy sauce. Ordinarily, I would just substitute regular soy sauce for the dark, but I happened to have a jar of dark in my fridge. Honestly, that was an ingredient I figured I would never use more than the one time I originally bought it for, but this is the third or fourth time I've used it.

The oxtails took around three hours to cook, which made them meltingly tender and brought out all of their rich savory flavor. The Asian additions took it well over the top.

It was so good, I may make it again. I mean, I have all of the ingredients.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Due process matters for everyone

Editor,

The United States has 52 million immigrants, most of whom are here legally.

Trump has promised to expel a million immigrants a year, starting with "violent criminals."

ICE has kidnapped and detained 66,000 individuals, 50 percent with no criminal record. Those with violent criminality are less than 10 percent.

As couples enter court for green card interviews, foreign born spouses without criminal records are separated from their families and sent to detention centers. Detainees are manacled and held for 10-70 days before release. They are held in overcrowded cells, cruelly treated and forced to defecate in front of other detainees and guards.

During peaceful citizen protests, ICE agents are shown using tear gas and throwing pepper balls at people's heads. One judge ruled these actions illegal. But ICE agents appear to believe that laws do not apply to them.

Recently, Homeland Security Director Kristi Noem announced ICE recruiting will eliminate all applicant age requirements, offer Student Loan forgiveness, provide lucrative overtime packages and offer selective $50,000 signing bonuses so that ICE has enough agents.

Understand that Due Process is not just a constitutional right afforded only to citizens. Legal restrictions on unlawful detention apply to all people (citizens and non-citizen immigrants) on U.S. soil. Currently our legal process has deteriorated with this administration and federal ICE agents neither respecting nor complying with our own laws.

Contact your Congressperson and Senators and demand that they enact laws placing restrictions on illegal ICE arrests, requiring that ICE afford Due Process to all detainees and stopping cruel and inhumane detention.

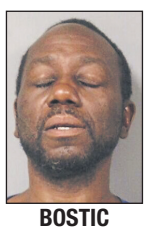
Ken Peterson,
Buchanan

Area residents get prison time on drug, drunk driving charges

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

NILES — Three area residents were sentenced to prison on drug and drunk driving charges Monday in Berrien County Trial Court at the Niles courthouse.

Earl Kenyotta Bostic, 55, of Niles, pleaded guilty to delivery/manufacture of meth and ecstasy and possession of a firearm by a prohibited person-both as a habitual offender and was sentenced to concurrent prison terms.


BOSTIC

He received a prison term of 13 years to 40 years on the drug charge and 14 months to five years on the weapons charge. He must pay $266 in fines and costs. He has credit for 131 days already served and must forfeit the weapon.

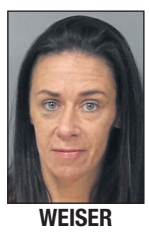
The incident occurred July 30 in Niles. He was found with meth, cocaine, fentanyl and ecstasy.

Bostic took issue with the sentencing guidelines which Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein followed. Bostic said his prior attorney had told him that the guidelines would likely call for a sentence of between 29 and 57 months in prison.

Bostic said that the lower sentencing guidelines was the only reason he agreed to plead guilty in the case. "I don't understand how it got to over 100 months in prison, it's just not right," he said. "I wouldn't have taken the plea if I knew that."

Judge Hosbein noted that he had explained to Bostic what the maximum sentence would be when Bostic pled and added that sentencing guidelines are based on a number of factors. The judge also pointed out that Bostic's previous attorney had been able to get six other felony charges dismissed as part of the plea agreement.

"I believe you, but he said what he thought the guidelines would be," the judge said. "Unfortunately, you were given the wrong information by your attorney … I will give you a sentence at the bottom of the current guidelines. This was an offense where you had a large amount of drugs on you and a weapon."


WEISER

A Niles woman was also sentenced to prison for possession of methamphetamines.

Rachel Lynn Weiser, 42, of Niles, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamines and was sentenced to 15 months to 10 years in prison. She has credit for 67 days already served and must pay $198 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Sept. 22 in Niles Township.

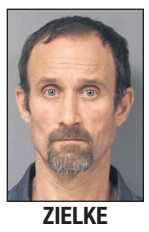
Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Jerry Vigansky noted that this was her third conviction for possession of meth and her fourth felony conviction overall. He added that she had committed offenses previously when she had been on probation.

Judge Hosbein said that he had the choice of incarceration or rehabilitation. "Rehabilitation is available to those who want to take advantage of it," he said. "You have been given that previously and I don't know if anything will change if you got probation again. You have run out of options."

A Watervliet resident was given a prison term for felony drunk driving.

Heinz Emil Zielke, 49, of Watervliet, pleaded guilty to third offense drunk driving and was sentenced to 15 months to five years in prison. He has credit for 64 days already served and must pay $1,618 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred July 4 in Berrien Township. His blood alcohol level was .272, more than three times the legal limit. This was actually his sixth conviction for drunk driving.


ZIELKE

Judge Hosbein said that Zielke has had probation and similar services offered him many times in the past. "You've not learned your lesson over the years and you're not using any tools you've been given," he said.

"I cannot imagine how many times you've said you're ready to change," he said. "You have had many times when your probation has been revoked after violations. Respectfully I don't believe that probation is appropriate in this case."

Also Monday, a Niles man was given jail and probation for use of meth.

CLAYTON

Robert Ernest-Lee Clayton, 59, of Niles, pleaded guilty to use of meth second offense and was sentenced to two years probation, 150 days in jail with credit for 56 days served and $658 in fines and costs. He can serve the rest of his jail sentence in the Tri-Cap program.

The incident occurred March 17 in Niles Township.

Edwardsburg man gets 3 years' probation for possession of methamphetamine

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — An Edwardsburg man with 25 criminal convictions was given the chance to stay out of prison Friday in Cass County Circuit Court.

NILSON

Trevor David Nilson, 60, of Pine Lake Street in Edwardsburg, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine as a habitual offender and was sentenced to three years probation, credit for 26 days served and $2,628 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred April 11 in Edwardsburg.

Cass County Prosecutor Victor Fitz said Nilson had placed himself in a very unfortunate situation in this incident where he was found in possession of meth. He said that Nilson began using marijuana as a teen and then went on to use alcohol, cocaine and meth.

Fitz said that Nilson's past record included convictions for larceny, weapons, drugs and fleeing and eluding police. He said he hopes Nilson will get help for his addiction but asked for a sentence of 300 days in jail.

"He has had some difficult issues with the loss of two of his children, one more recently," Fitz said. "Most families are touched in some way by tragedy, some more severe than others. Much of it is how we respond. He has a lifetime of indulgent drug behavior … I understand and sympathize with his loss, but his response has been absolutely incorrect."

"Another thing he needs to keep in mind is that while his life is difficult, when he uses meth he contributes to that chain of drugs coming from Mexico," he said. "That's a trail of tears. People are killed, maimed and human trafficked. The victim here is not just Cass County, but the countless victims with that meth trail."

Defense attorney Robert Drake had a different perspective. He said that while Adult Treatment Court was no longer an option for Nilson, his client still needs help. He said the court knows that counseling, rehabilitation and treatment work in getting people off drugs.

Nilson said he knows he made a bad choice and is sorry for his actions.

"You made a bad choice, you made a lot of bad choices," Cass County Circuit Court Judge Mark Herman said. "All too often people come in and have an excuse for why they did something. It's how you choose to respond. You can respond negatively and say please excuse me or respond positively. What you did was selfish and then you come in and use it as an excuse."

Judge Herman said he decided to sentence Nilson to probation rather than jail or prison because the prosecutor had initially agreed to the Adult Treatment Court program when it was still an option.

"I will give you that opportunity for probation," he said. "You will do these programs. Probation is not get out of jail. Guess what? If you violate, you will go to prison. You have 25 convictions and you are 60 years old. If you violate, you will go to prison and it won't be a minimum, it won't be 18 months, it will be higher."

"Quit being selfish, you have a wife and other children," he said.

Two other people had been scheduled to be sentenced Friday morning, but one person did not show up and another hadn't had his presentence investigation report done.

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Dowagiac Department of Public Services moves into new location

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

Photos by Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications
Community members toured the Dowagiac Department of Public Services' new facility Thursday.

DOWAGIAC — The Dowagiac Department of Public Services has a new home.

The team is now operating from its new and improved facility at 302 Wolf Street. DPS hosted an open house Thursday where community members toured the space, which houses both administration and maintenance staff under one roof.

In September 2023, the council approved design and financing plans to construct a new fire station and rehab the former fire station to become the new home for the Department of Public Services. The plan created new headquarters suited to each department's needs while freeing up space required for the South Front Street Renovation Project.

The renovated vehicle bay, previously occupied by the Fire Department, is now climate-controlled. Extensive work included painting and refinishing the roof, and installing additional heating elements. Safety features include built-in exhaust systems with wall sensors that detect elevated carbon monoxide levels and automatically activate fans.

DPS Director Matthew Newton said that a major improvement is the creation of a dedicated training area and staff meeting space. Previously, admin staff were housed in City Hall, which limited interaction with field crews. The new setup improves camaraderie and allows the entire department, field crews (water, sewer, plowing) and admin support, to work together more closely. Additional new shelving was installed for storage and quick access to parts for emergency repairs.

"Having a space like this, we can have training sessions here for the guys in a dedicated space," Newton said. "We can get our mechanic and a wash bay.

"Having a dedicated bay here for this heavily used, expensive piece of equipment is important," Newton said. "We can get our mechanic work done here and we have a nice vehicle wash bay here, too. This gives us the ability to bring cars in, rinse them off, rinse that salt out, and hopefully increase the longevity of the vehicles and also keep them looking nice."

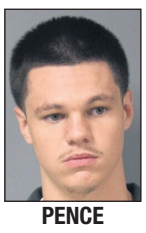
Newton said his team is thrilled about the new facility and what it means for the city and its public works staff.

"I think it's really good for everybody. I think we are building a lot more camaraderie with everybody that works in this department. It's working out really well."

Pence found guilty of murder in 2022 shooting

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

NILES — A former Dowagiac resident was found guilty of a 2022 murder Friday after a three-day trial before Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein. The trial began Wednesday at the Niles courthouse with jury selection, opening arguments and the first witnesses called.


PENCE

Reese David Pence, now 20, formerly of both Dowagiac and Niles, was found guilty of first degree murder, carrying a concealed weapon, receiving, concealing or possession of a stolen vehicle and use of a weapon in the commission of a felony. He faces sentencing on Jan. 12.

The sentencing for first degree murder could end up in a Miller hearing as he was just 17 when he committed the crime. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that an automatic life without parole sentence for juvenile offenders is unconstitutional except in rare cases.

The jury of eight women and four men deliberated less than four hours before reaching their verdict. Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Myrene Koch tried the case for the people and said afterwards that justice had been served and that the first-degree murder conviction was justified.

The incident occurred May 12, 2022 at the Arbor Trails apartment complex on North Fifth Street in Niles with police receiving numerous calls of a shooting that night in the complex. A 14-year-old juvenile, Gavin Blankenship, was shot and later dies from his injuries.

Witnesses reported that four teenagers were walking outside one of the buildings when a pickup truck pulled up and a person wearing a red ski mask got out. He confronted the four teens and a fistfight ensued before he allegedly pulled out a gun and fired three times.

Over a dozen witnesses in all were called to the witness stand by the prosecution Wednesday and Thursday before closing arguments and jury instructions Friday morning. Those called to testify included witnesses to the May 12, 2022 incident, crime scene and forensic analysts and police officers.

In closing arguments Friday morning, Koch reviewed the testimony of witnesses she presented during the trial as well as the elements of the crimes Pence is charged with. In doing so, she reminded jurors that the case is about the death Blankenship, who was just walking with his sister and two friends.

She noted that Pence was identified through statements by the passenger in the stolen truck Pence was driving and Snapchat videos Pence had made that day showing a gun, the red mask and the stolen truck. She said there were no gaps in the evidence and Pence had ample opportunity to reflect and deliberate before choosing the actions he took.

She also tied this incident to the death a month later in 2022 of a Niles woman who Pence has already been convicted of killing because she had told police about his involvement in the Blankenship murder.

Defense attorney Carri Briseno did not call any witnesses for the defense.

Briseno acknowledged in her closing arguments that her client was there but emphasized that his actions were not premeditated but those of an impulsive teenager. "This was a tragedy, they were all teens, kids," she said. "… This was not a drive by shooting, he did not have a gun in his hand when he got out of the truck. It all happened very, very fast."

Pence was brought back to Michigan from Indiana in August. He has been serving prison terms at the Miami Correctional Facility for two Indiana murders also in 2022.

He was convicted in 2023 for the murders of two Niles women at an apartment complex north of South Bend. He received sentences of 55 years in prison on each count plus an additional 12.5 years in prison on each count for the use of a firearm in the commission of the murders.

In addition to this conviction and the Indiana sentences, Pence faces charges in St. Joseph from his time in the Berrien County Jail since August. He faces five felonies from incidents at the jail, including four counts of resisting and obstructing police and one count of assault of a prison employee.

SMC graduates 14-member nursing class

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — Southwestern Michigan College Wednesday welcomed 14 new nurses to America's largest health care profession with more than four million registered nurses nationwide.

Despite growth, the United States faces a significant nursing shortage, with projections for 2025 and beyond showing critical gaps – especially for RNs. The need for nurses is expected to grow faster than average, with more than 193,000 annual openings projected for RNs.

SMC's fall class received associate degrees in nursing in a pinning ceremony in the theatre of the Dale A. Lyons Building on the Dowagiac campus. The class joins the ranks of 3,231 SMC nursing graduates.

Dr. Melissa Kennedy, dean of the School of Nursing and Health Services, welcomed family and friends.

"This evening marks a significant milestone, a moment when our students step forward from rigorous academic and clinical preparation into the noble practice of nursing," Kennedy said.

Adjunct Instructor Lisa Pulling addressed graduates.

"I hope you carry that professionalism and compassion you showed at the hospital during obstetrics clinicals into your future nursing careers," Pulling said. "Congratulations, Class of 2025. My wisdom for you is that your dedication will make a difference in the lives of countless patients. This is just the beginning of an incredible journey."

Graduates include: Mariana Allen of Niles, Alexis Clanton of Edwardsburg, Madalyn Coleman of Berrien Center, Danielle Confer of Decatur, Rachel Garner of Three Rivers, Sara Greenway of Dowagiac, Abby Ickes of Dowagiac, Timothy Keene of Dowagiac, Brooke Leonard of Marcellus, Luisa Lopez Rodriguez of Bristol, Savannah Lowery of Marcellus, Rachelle Miller of Dowagiac, Carlos Rosales of Marcellus and Gabriella Stover of Berrien Springs.

SMC's nursing faculty includes Chair Rona Goodrich, MSN, RN; Stacey Dwyer, MSN, RN; Rebecca Eichler-Toth, BSN, RN; Hazel Lim, MSN, RN; Haley Smith, MSN, RN; Yolanda Roche, MSN, FNP, RN; adjuncts Megan Austin, DNP, MBA, RN; Lynn Behrens, BSN, RNC; Emily Burandt, BSN, RN; Brian Edgerly, BSN, RN; Jeanette Clark, BSN, RN; Allison Coleman, BSN, RN; Michelle Mercado, BSN, RN, NPD-BC; Jessica Pethick, BSN, RNC; Lisa Pulling, BS, RNC; Emma Schroeder; Donna Stiver, MSN, RN; and Alisa Ventrone, BSN, RN.

Mollie Grabemeyer is the nursing success and retention coach. Administrative assistant Victoria Christen coordinates the simulation lab.

In an unprecedented three-way tie, Sara Greenway, Abby Ickes and Savannah Lowery were presented Lamps of Knowledge in recognition of the peer-selected Florence Nightingale Award embodying selflessness, compassion, thoughtfulness, team play, dependability, generosity and humility.

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Sports

Brandywine beats Niles in rivalry matchup
Page B2

Got results?
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Balanced scoring, second-half defense propel Cassopolis to win

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — Nine different Cassopolis players reached the scoring column, including three in double figures, in an impressive 70-51 Southwest 10 Conference boys' basketball win over visiting White Pigeon Friday.

Charles Superczynski's Rangers (1-0) used a huge offensive performance in the second half to break open a close game and hollow out the season-opening win.

Cassopolis took a 25-21 lead into halftime over White Pigeon before outscoring its guests 45-30 in the final half.

Junior guard Lucas Williams poured in 11 points to pace the Rangers. Jamier Pratt and Trevon-Peterson Evans added 10 points apiece, while Mason Nelson added nine, Jaylen Pratt and Ayden Gilliam contributed eight apiece and Carti 'Yae Warren scored seven for Cassopolis.

Warren and Jamier Pratt hauled down seven rebounds apiece. Williams added seven assists and one steal. Jaylen Pratt added four steals, Ayden Gillam contributed four assists and Peterson-Evans finished with three assists.

Senior Ty Strawser from White Pigeon paced all scorers on the night with 29 points, including seven of the Chiefs' eight three pointers. Riley Horner and Jase Roach added six points apiece for the Chiefs.

Cassopolis capitalized on a pair of White Pigeon turnovers to score in transition and knocked down a trio of three pointers, including two by Williams, as the Rangers extended its lead to 42-27 to start the second half.

See **PROPEL**, page B1

Scott Hassinger / For Leader Publications
Cassopolis junior forward Carti'Yae Warren (12) takes the ball inside on White Pigeon freshman Riley Horner (3).

Brandywine girls roll past White Pigeon

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

WHITE PIGEON — Despite several new faces out on the court, veteran Niles Brandywine girls' basketball coach Josh Hood contends that fans can still expect to see his Lady Bobcats play with the same style and enthusiasm that have long been a trademark in the program's success.

Brandywine, Division 3 state semifinalists in the 2024-25 season, graduated seven seniors that were four-year varsity players off last year's 27-1 record squad.

The 2025-26 Lady Bobcats showed up and played with that same grit and intensity at both ends of the floor in Tuesday's season-opening 58-20 non-league win at White Pigeon that fans have been accustomed to seeing in Hood's 17 seasons as Brandywine's head coach.

"When you lose seven seniors, including three all-staters, you're going to have some first-game jitters with some new faces out there. I was proud of our girls though. I thought we played pretty good defense, but we have to learn how to box out better and be a little more physical inside," Hood said.

"A lot of our freshmen got some good minutes tonight. Every year I hear this chatter about the good seniors we lost the year before. In my 17 years here, we always take a lot of pride in this program. Tradition doesn't graduate in our program. We are very excited about this season. Our girls play with a lot of standards. It doesn't matter if the game is at 5 p.m. on a Tuesday or if we're playing at the Breslin Center. I thought our girls did a nice job of turning the jets on early tonight. I give a lot of credit to Coach Brooke (McClure) and their top two players in Sydney (McClure) and Sadie (McDaniel). They played hard and kept fighting the entire way. We really appreciated them playing us and I think they are going to have a really good season in Division 4."

Brandywine's two returning starters in seniors McKenna Price and Karleigh Byrd were joined on the floor to start the game by freshman Zaya Price, McKenna's younger sister, along with juniors Lilly Gill and Brook Brumitt.

"Some of the fastest girls I've ever coached are in our starting lineup," Hood added.

Gill, Byrd and McKenna Price have all sketched their names on the school record board in track and field.

'Brook has spent the last two years sitting behind and learning from two all-staters in her older sister Kaydence Brumitt (Valparaiso women's volleyball) and Adeline Gill (Kalamazoo College women'\s basketball) and Mckenna Price is now our point guard after sitting behind former all-staters Ellie Knapp and Miley Young. These girls have been able to learn from people ahead of them and how hard we like to play. We're really excited about this group," Hood said.

Scott Hassinger / For Leader Publications
Aiiyanna Walker (24) of Niles Brandywine fights Rachel Byler (20) of White Pigeon for possession of the basketball.

Also seeing quality minutes on the floor in the contest were freshmen Hailey Smith and Aiiyanna Walker; sophomore Sydney Roeder; junior Chelsey Olson and seniors Macy Pellow, Sydney Olson, Brie Reese and Makenzi Myer.

"I thought all our girls 1-13 did a nice job. We understand we have a lot to work on still and we have to work on developing more depth. It will be fun to review the film from tonight in March and see how far they have come. We are very vanilla and just scratching the surface right now, but we're going to keep working hard to get better with things like our weekend practices. They have bought into the program and I'm very proud of their effort. I think its going to be fun to follow this team throughout this season," Hood said.

Most of Tuesday's game was very fun for Brandywine, which jumped out to 25-4 lead after one quarter before extending that margin to 49-8 entering halftime.

Hood was then able to substitute freely during the second half when the Lady Bobcats built their lead to 55-16 by conclusion of the third quarter.

See **ROLL**, page B1

Love named '25 Disney Spirit Award recipient

NOTRE DAME ATHLETICS

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Junior running back Jeremiyah Love has been named the recipient of the 2025 Disney Spirit Award. This prestigious award is presented annually to college football's most inspirational figure.

Love is Notre Dame's first-ever recipient of the Disney Spirit Award.

Love has delivered a remarkable season on the field as a finalist for the Heisman Trophy, the Maxwell Award, the Walter Camp Player of the Year, the Doak Walker Award and the Pony Express Award.

His ability to astound, connect and inspire has made him one of the most special college football players in the country. Not only has he wowed audiences with his play, he has played an active role in his community and inspired people across the country with his story.

Love hopes to inspire others not just by his play, but by encouraging others to be wholly themselves, to embrace what makes them unique and do things their way.

From a young age, this confidence was instilled in him by his family. Jeremiyah has continued that confidence throughout his life. Growing up, he enjoyed doing things on his own and was very adventurous. When he started school he operated differently. He had specific desires for his possessions and his organization. His parents worked with him to find what was best for him, and sports were found to be a great motivator for him. His confidence, and his competitiveness, was what propelled him to succeed.

His parents spoke with Jeremiyah's doctor, who advised that while Love exhibited tendencies that could be considered to be "on the spectrum," Jeremiyah should continue to operate as himself, with his parents' support. It was important to not change Jeremiyah, but let Jeremiyah change the world.

To this day, Jeremiyah is fully comfortable in being exactly who he is, and his talent on the field combined with his personality, his competitiveness,

and his outstanding talent have taken the college football world by storm.

Since the airing of Jeremiyah's story on ESPN College Gameday, he has received countless messages of thanks and noting how he has inspired children and adults to pursue being their authentic selves.

See **LOVE**, page B1

U-M fires Sherrone Moore for cause

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

ANN ARBOR — The University of Michigan fired head football coach Sherrone Moore for cause Wednesday following a university investigation.

Athletic Director Warde Manuel released a statement confirming the dismissal:

"U-M head football coach Sherrone Moore has been terminated, with cause, effective immediately. Following a University investigation, credible evidence was found that Coach Moore engaged in an inappropriate relationship with a staff member. This conduct constitutes a clear violation of University policy, and U-M maintains zero tolerance for such behavior."

Moore finished his second season as head coach with a 9-3 record. Because he was fired "for cause," the university is expected to avoid buying out the remaining years of his contract.

Associate head coach Biff Poggi has been appointed interim head coach.

Hours after the university announced his firing, Moore was detained by police in Saline and turned over to Pittsfield Township Police for an investigation into potential charges related to an alleged assault. Moore was booked in the Washtenaw County Jail on Wednesday night and remains in custody as of Friday morning.

Brandywine boys edge Niles 54-49

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Monday's matchup between rivals Niles and Brandywine lived up to the hype.

When the final buzzer sounded, the Bobcats emerged victorious with a 54-49 win.

Brandywine senior Nylen Goins led all scorers with 23 points and Will Hubbard and Ryder Richard scored 14 and 13 points respectively. Brenden Olsen led Niles (2-2) with 14 points and Brayden Favors and Donny Williams scored 10 points each while Derrick Hill added eight points.

Brandywine (4-0) led 22-16 at halftime and Niles led 34-31 entering the fourth quarter.

"We struggled to score in the first half," said Niles coach Mark Haase. "We missed a lot by the rim. We had a solid third quarter but not a good fourth. Brandywine was solid down the stretch. We had several free throws with 20 seconds left to tie the game but unfortunately didn't make them. It's a tough loss; Brandywine is a good team and will have a nice year. We'll have to rebound and get better offensively this week."

Photos by Nick Shelton / For Leader Publications

Brandywine defeated Niles 54-49 Monday at Niles High School.

Buchanan boys pull away from Bronson

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Buchanan boys basketball team moved to 2-0 on the season with a 53-43 win over visiting Bronson Friday night.

Leading 24-22 at halftime, the Bucks outscored Bronson 17-6 in the third quarter to pull away.

Buchanan was led by Liam McBeth with 15 points and Tyler Frame had 11 while Ben Bosse had 9. Bronson was led by Warren Watto who had 11.

Buchanan hosts Edwardsburg at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Photos provided

The Buchanan boys basketball team moved to 2-0 on the season with a 53-43 win over visiting Bronson Friday night.

LOVE

From page B2

Love has made it important to connect with the community and fans, especially kids. This past summer, he put on a camp for more than 200 local children in the South Bend area. He has also hosted a financial literacy workshop for high school students in the South Bend area through a local partnership.

He has also helped develop a comic book based off of his life and personality, entitled Jeremonstar, able to express his love of comics with creativity and a desire to share the messages of perseverance and embracing one's unique talents.

On the field, his season was outstanding. This season, Love posted 199 rushes for 1,372 yards and 18 touchdowns, adding 27 receptions for 280 yards and three touchdowns. He averaged 6.9 yards per rush on the season. Even more impressive, he did it all while sharing a backfield with fellow running back Jadarian Price, who himself totaled 113 rushes for 674 yards and 11 touchdowns.

Six FBS players rushed for 1,300 yards during the 2025 regular season. Love is the only player on that list who shares the backfield with another running back who has also rushed for at least 600 yards this season.

At the end of the regular season, Love continued to rank as one of the most outstanding players in college football, ranking second nationally in scoring (10.5), second in total points (126), second in total touchdowns (21) third in rushing touchdowns (18), fourth in rushing yards (1,372), fifth in rushing yards per game (114.3), fifth in yards per carry (6.89) and fifth in all-purpose yards (137.67).

Since 1996, Walt Disney World has presented the Disney Spirit Award to college football figures and teams who embody resilience, positivity and selflessness, showcasing a strength of spirit in the face of adversity.

ROLL

From page B2

Lily Gill finished the night as Brandywine's top scorer with 15 points while Zaya Price added 14 followed by Smith with eight and Byrd posted six points.

The Lady Bobcats netted 23 field-goals, including six triples, to go with a 6-of-10 (60 percent) showing at the foul stripe.

White Pigeon was led in scoring by Sydney McClure and Sadie McDaniel with nine points apiece for the Lady Chiefs, who made eight field-goal attempts and 3-of-9 (33.3 percent) at the charity stripe.

Brandywine won the rebounding war as well against White Pigeon 27-22. Byrd pulled down six boards for the Lady Bobcats (1-0) and Zaya Price added five.

Sydeny McClure brought down nine and McDaniel grabbed six rebounds for White Pigeon (0-1).

Brandywine took adequate care of the basketball, committing just seven turnovers to 12 miscues for White Pigeon.

"Niles Brandywine is super tough and we put them on our schedule because we want to try and compete with the best. We struggled in the first half, but we played better the last two quarters. We stayed more composed in the second half and got a glimpse of what we need to work on for the remainder of the season," White Pigeon head coach Brooke McClure said.

While taking the season one-game at a time, the long-range focus for Brandywine always centers around winning a Lakeland Conference championship and have a strong enough state tournament run to get back to the Breslin.

"We want to win a conference title and go back to state and finish the job. That will never vary and our other goal is to just have a product in our program that makes our community proud through our servant leadership and giving back to those businesses who are so supportive of our program," Hood said.

PROPEL

From page B2

Cassopolis outscored White Pigeon 24-14 in the third quarter to hike its lead to 49-34 entering the final eight minutes.

Strawser drained a triple to open the final stanza, bringing his ballclub back within 11, 49-38. Jaylin Pratt hit back-to-back jumpers and Gillam nailed a triple to extend the Rangers' advantage to 18 points, 56-38 with 4:40 left. Cassopolis went on to outscore White Pigeon 21-16 during the stanza and pick up the win.

Fourth-year Cassopolis head coach Charles Superczynski II was most pleased with how well his Rangers took care of the basketball. The Rangers only had seven turnovers in the contest compared to 13 for the Chiefs.

White Pigeon came out to start the game in a 3-2 zone, something Superczynski said his team hadn't worked on very much prior to the season opener.

"We hadn't seen or practiced against that. At halftime we decided to switch over to man-to-man and that got us fired up defensively and we were able to force some turnovers in the second half," Superczysnski said.

"We have all of our team back from last season and we brought in a couple new guys. That's awesome because you don't have to teach as much as you did in the past so now we're just building. We averaged between 15 and 20 turnovers last year, it was our achilles heel. To only have seven tonight and 20 assists shows we can take care of the ball and spread it around. These kids trust one another and anyone can make a bucket for us when we need them to. Defense is our focal point. When we play well on that end its going to make it difficult for opposing teams to score the basketball. We have to rebound, but this is a great shooting team."

Cassopolis jumped out to a quick 6-2 lead with two close-range jumpers by Peterson-Evans and a putback from Aareen Buck-Hooper. Strawser's triple evened the game up at 8-8 before Peterson-Evans put the Rangers back on top with a layup. Strawser's deuce tied the contest at 10-10 at the end of the first quarter.

The Rangers eventually built a 18-13 lead, including key putbacks from Warren and Ayden Gillam. Nelson added a layup and Peterson-Evans added a deuce that stretched Cassopolis' lead to eight, 25-17. Roach and Strawser netted two points each to slice the Chiefs' deficit to two baskets, 25-21 entering intermission.

"We are excited about this team. These guys are trying to limit their exoectations and just concentrate on the next game before them. This is a group where we can rotate almost anyone into the game and not lose anything," Superzynski said.

Cassopolis made a total of 29 field-goal attempts and went 6-of-13 at the foul strip. In comparison, White Pigeon connected made 16 shots from the floor and finished 11-of-14 at the foul stripe.

Girls basketball

Edwardsburg 52, Bridgman 19
On Tuesday

EDWARDSBURG
Shelby Laubach 25, Kya Shier 11, Mallory Schrock 9, Liyah Worthington 4, Shyann Thomas Flanery 2. Totals: 22 5-10 52.
BRIDGMAN
Carmen Ernsberger 13, Angel Milan 4, Ava Ruff 2. Totals: 5 2-4 19.

Edwardsburg	**13**	**22**	**31**	**52**
Bridgman	**2**	**7**	**10**	**19**

3-point baskets: Edwardsburg 3 (Schrock 2, Laubach), Bridgman 1 (Ernsberger). Total fouls: Edwardsburg 12, Bridgman 8. Records: Edwardsburg 1-0, Bridgman 0-1.

Otsego 70, Edwardsburg 40
On Thursday

OTSEGO
Brooke Smalldon 23, Mya Engbens 14, Audrey Lingbeek 9, Madden Fitzpatrick 6, Kendall Housh 5, Malania Miller 4, Olivia Hildebrand 3, Hallie Prough 2, Emma Engbers 2. Totals: 29 11-15 70.
EDWARDSBURG
Shelby Laubach 15, Kya Shier 14, Mallory Schrock 4, Nanette DuFour 3, Harlowe Gropp 2, Liyah Worthington 2. Totals: 11 5-12 40.

Otsego	**18**	**39**	**61**	**70**
Edwardsburg	**5**	**16**	**30**	**40**

3-point baskets: Otsego 1 (Smalldon), Edwardsburg 1 (Laubach). Total fouls: Otsego 13, Edwardsburg 11. Records: Otsego 2-0, Edwardsburg 1-1.

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0500 MERCHANDISE

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0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF Berrien

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE AND CREDITORS NOTICE

FILE NO.
2025-0879-DE-R

ESTATE OF: Charles Steven Perry, **Deceased**
Date of Birth: August 21, 1951

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including creditors and heirs of the deceased whose address(es) are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

Be advised that a Petition for Determination of Heirs has been filed with the Court and a hearing on said Petition will be held on **December 23, 2025, at 10:15 A.M.**, at the Berrien County Court House, 811 Port Street, St Joseph, MI 49085.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The Decedent, 1740 West Bertrand Road, Niles, Michigan, died August 24, 2022.

Creditors of the Decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Rudy Arnold, named personal representative, or to the probate court at 811 Port Street, Saint Joseph, Michigan 49085 and the named personal representative within four (4) months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date December 6, 2025

Robert L. Landgraf, Jr. (P23000)
Attorney
Post Office Box 1310
Niles, Michigan 49120
(269)683-8300

Dennis R. Gnetz
Petitioner
15487 Tabor Hill Court
Granger, IN 46530

Case No. 24-000609-CH Circuit Court Sale In pursuance and by virtue of an Order Granting Motion for Default Judgment and for Judicial Foreclosure as to All Defendants in the Circuit Court for the County of Cass, State of Michigan, made and entered on the 4th of August, A.D., 2025 in a certain cause therein pending, wherein CitiMortgage, Inc. was the Plaintiff and Any and all heirs, Assignees and Devisees of Esther A. Gogley and Rosalie Simpson were the Defendants. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I shall sell at public auction to the highest bidder, at public vendue, at the Cass County Courthouse (that being the place of holding the Circuit Court for said County), on the 14th of January, A.D., 2026 at 10:00 o`clock in the forenoon, Eastern Standard Time, the following described property, viz: A certain piece or parcel of land situated in the Township of Penn, County of Cass, State of Michigan: LOT NUMBER TEN (10), IN THE VILLAGE OF JAMESTOWN, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF. 14-100-100-010-00 c/k/a: 19125 Quaker St, Cassopolis, MI 49031 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale. Clint Roach, Deputy Sheriff _/s/ Melissa Z. Prantzalos Melissa Z. Prantzalos of Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. Attorney for CitiMortgage, Inc. Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 1576877 (11-15)(12-20)

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on February 11, 2026. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Richard K. Burkhart and Linda Burkhart to One Reverse Mortgage, LLC dated July 18, 2018 and recorded July 26, 2018 in Liber 1142 at Page 1901, Cass County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by Longbridge Financial, LLC by assignment and/or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $133,134.49. Said premises are located in Cass County, Michigan and are described as: Land situated in the Township of Newberg in the County of Cass in the State of MI ALL THAT CERTAIN PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF NEWBERG, COUNTY OF CASS, AND STATE OF MICHIGAN, AND SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT: "THAT PART OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 31, TOWN 6 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, NEWBERG TOWNSHIP, CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN DESCRIBED AS; "PARCEL A" FROM THE WEST QUARTER CORNER OF SAID SECTION MEASURE SOUTH 89° 35' EAST, 446.90 FEET ALONG THE EAST AND WEST QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE MEASURE NORTH 32° 50' EAST ALONG THE CENTER LINE OF LEWIS LAKE ROAD, 489.70 FEET; THENCE MEASURE NORTH 28° 55' EAST, 395.80 FEET; THENCE MEASURE NORTH 32° 50' EAST, 23.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE NORTH 75° 41' WEST, 179.99 FEET; THENCE NORTH 32° 38' EAST, 62.28 FEET; THENCE NORTH 80° 04' EAST, 232.60 FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 32° 50' WEST, 162.90 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. ALSO INCLUDING ALL LANDS BETWEEN THE MOST WESTERLY DESCRIBED LINE AND THE WATERS EDGE OF LEWIS LAKE. CONTAINING 0.43 ACRES." Said property is commonly known as 61336 Lewis Lake Rd, Vandalia, MI 49095. The redemption period shall be 12 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: December 8, 2025 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 25-32312. (12-13)(01-03)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on January 7, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Micah J. Tartt, a married man and Karrie Tartt, his wife and Christine Rae Davis, an unmarried woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Date of Mortgage: July 10, 2003
Date of Mortgage Recording: July 14, 2003
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $36,364.03
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in City of Dowagiac, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: LOT NUMBERED FOURTEEN (14) HARTER, ANDREWS AND BLISH ADDITION TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN
LIBER 34 OF DEEDS, PAGE 136, CASS COUNTY RECORDS.
Common street address (if any): 116 E Railroad St, Dowagiac, MI 49047-1448
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage
foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: December 6, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248)642-2515 1578472 (12-06)(12-27)

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on JANUARY 7, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Joshua A. Hernandez and Laura E. Hernandez, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, Mortgagee, dated August 11, 2021 and recorded August 20, 2021 in Liber 1202, Page 232 and Loan Modification Agreement recorded on May 1, 2023, in Liber 1231, Page 2419, Cass County Records, Michigan.
Said mortgage is now held by The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an officer of the United States, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Eighty-One Thousand Three Hundred Eight and 3/100 Dollars ($181,308.03).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public vendue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on JANUARY 7, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Howard, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Lot 5 in Misty Acres, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 1-H of plats, Page 395, Cass County Records.
2202 Invicta Drive, Niles, Michigan 49120
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 29, 2025
File No. 25-013858
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400 (11-29)(12-20)

Economy Storage, 2206 Yankee Street, Niles, MI 49120.
Auction Saturday December 27, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Unit #	Name	Unit #	Name
9/185	Candy Whitmire.	10	Charmin Kelly
12	Michael Purdy.	22	Amber Bedenfield
28	Emalee Anderson.	57	Caleb Dubik
67	Jerome Jankowiak	77	Stoney Tittle
82	Erica Pitone	92	Robert Procopi
94	Joshua Thompson	95	Bobbie Epps
109	David Jann.	116	Melissa Kaeding
127/633	Chris Norris	145/467/468	Michael Merritt
148	Gloster Johnson	164	Bradley Hattenback
184/66	Mary Anderson	189	Cassandrta Cannon
191	Alan Smith.	192	Patricia Yoder
196	Colton Wedgworth	222	Jon & Ruth Brown
223	Derek Baker	228/367	Shawnette Booker
239	Lyman Griffin	240	Teyshawn Wallace
268	Dan Hoft	272	Kurt Shepard
273	Tony Pompey	278	Chelsie Carlyle
284	Kathleen Peterson	305	Diane Bomke
323	Delaine Croom/Kaitlyn Boyd	324	Woodrow Bowers
331	Valerie Outlaw	342	Terrence Moss
346	DaMonica Williams	356	Chase Molica
379	Bobbie Helms	386	Shannon Lego
389	Parnell Jenkins	398	Andre Love
399	Les Hart.	410/534	Rebecca Coleman
416	Heidi Arbri	429	Aaron Haynes
442	Dawn Hojara	451	Jean Fitch
452	Tyler Mahar	492/676	Malawi Association
515	Danielle Flenar	525	Rick Nobles
530	Justin Landis	541	Nicole Hurt
545	Candy Whitmire	556	Matt Mazingo
606	Zoltan Kovach	608	Robert Conner
638	Britney Stanczyk	665	Rodney Prescott
677/567	Julie Potate		

Niles U-Stor-It, 1314 E. Main Street, Niles, MI 49120.
Auction Saturday December 27, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.

13	Michael Purdy.	23	Miranda Wendzel
54	Cynthia Swisher	57	Nathan Haynes

J & J Storage, 2220 S. 13th Street and
2627 S. 11th Street, Niles, MI 49120.
Auction Saturday December 27, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

57	James Colburn.	200A	Mike Nidiffer
233A	Donna Lawton	301A	Matt Mazingo
140	Ronnie West	168	Jerol Williams Jr.
197	James Bennett	230	Felisha Liberty
238/466	James Diss	250	Robert Clayton/Jessica Vissik
263	Tamara Holmes	292	The Woodshed Crafts
327	Robert Davis	346	Joe Jones
373	Rhonda Sue Outlaw	377	Christy Stevens
481	Natosha Libertowski	483	Michael Donoho

RESERVE THIS SPACE TODAY!

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on January 14, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Cheryl Reeves, a married couple and Ronald Reeves, a married couple
Original Mortgagee: ABN Amro Mortgage Group, Inc.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing
Date of Mortgage: February 16, 2001
Date of Mortgage Recording: March 2, 2001
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $25,159.23
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Wayne, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Parcel 1:
Lots numbered 9 and 10, Block 44 Twin Shores, Wayne Township, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, Page 156, Cass County Records.
Parcel 2:
Lots 27 and 28, Block 44, Twin Shores, a Subdivision, according to the recorded Plat thereof, recorded in the office of register of deed Cass County, Michigan, said Plat being situated in Sections 15 and 16, Wayne Township, Cass County, Michigan.
Common street address (if any): 52950 Chappel St, Dowagiac, MI 49047-9452
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: December 13, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515 1579380 (12-13)(01-03)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on January 7, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Donald Gordan Davies, III, Married Man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Churchill Mortgage Corporation, its successors and assigns Foreclosing Assignee: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC Date of Mortgage: November 17, 2023 Date of Mortgage Recording: November 29, 2023 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $176,696.64 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Village of Vandalia, Cass County, Michigan, and are described as: Beginning at a point which is 507.5 feet South of the Southeast corner of State and Maple Streets in Section 26, Township 6 South, Range 14 West; thence East 300.5 feet; thence South 132 feet; thence West 300.5 feet to the East Line of Maple Street; thence North 132 feet to the Place of Beginning. Commonly Known as: 60795 Maple St., Vandalia, MI 49095 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 12/06/2025 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 319660 (12-06)(12-27)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on January 7, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Timothy Grigalanz and Faustina Lynn Grigalanz, Husband and Wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., solely as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans Foreclosing Assignee: Planet Home Lending, LLC Date of Mortgage: March 20, 2024 Date of Mortgage Recording: March 22, 2024 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $255,187.48 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Township of Ontwa, Cass County, Michigan, and are described as: That part of the West Half of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 14, Town 8 South, Range 15 West, Ontwa Township, Cass County, Michigan, which is described as beginning at a point on the West line of said Section which is South 1322.74 feet from the Northwest corner of said Section; thence North 89°57'15" East, along the North 1/8th line of said Section 661.89 feet; thence South 0°03'20"East, 661.22 feet; thence. South 89°56'30" West 662.53 feet to the West line of said Section; thence, North along said line 661.37 feet to the point of beginning. EXCEPT, that part of the West Half of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 14, Town 8 South, Range 15 West, which is described as: Beginning at a point on the West line of said Section which is South 1322.74 feet from the Northwest corner of said Section 14; thence North 89°57'15"East along the North 1/8th line of said Section, 661.89 feet; thence South 0°03'20" East, 300.00 feet; thence South 89°57'15" West, 662.18 feet; thence North 300.00 feet to the point of beginning. ALSO EXCEPTING, That part of the West Half of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 14, Township 8 South, Range 15 West, Ontwa Township, Cass County, Michigan, described as: Beginning at a point on the West line ' of said Section 14, a distance of 1622.74 feet South of the Northwest corner of said Section; thence North 89°57'15" East 662.18 feet; thence South 0°03'20" East 361.23 feet; thence South 89°56'30" West 379.00 feet; thence North O°O3'2O" East 276.23 feet; thence South 89°57'15" West 283.80 feet to the West line of said Section 14; thence North on said Section line 85.08 feet to the point of beginning. Commonly Known as: 70335 Martin Rd., Edwardsburg, MI 49112 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 11/22/2025 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 321574 (11-22)(12-13)

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
Cass COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
24-178-DE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor

Estate of: ELLIE JOE HARRIS, JR., Deceased

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Ellie Joe Harris, Jr., died 01-09-2024. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kimberly Jones, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date December 5, 2025

Robert W. LaBre, J.D. P74085
Attorney name Bar no.
68897 S. Cass St
Address
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
City, state, zip
269-663-8554
Telephone no.

Kimberly Jones
Personal representative name
115 Walkers Court, Alpharetta, GA 30004
City, state, zip
770-296-1208
Telephone no.

PUBLIC NOTICE
AUCTION
Niles Storage, 2457 Yankee St.
Niles, MI 49120
December 13 @ 4:00pm
Owner's lien - overdue rents

Unit # 52 Name: Brooke King
Misc, household items, dresser, children's clothing/toys, multiple lg boxes

PEOPLE DO READ SMALL ADS!

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
43rd CIRCUIT COURT

ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION/POSTING AND NOTICE OF ACTION

CASE NO. 25-000628-CZ

PLAINTIFF'S NAME:
Edwardsburg Estates MHC, LLC
C/O-Plaintiff's Attorney

PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY:
The Law Offices of Aaron D. Cox, PLLC
By: Aaron D. Cox (P69346)
/Elizabeth E. Ellison (P82098)
23820 Eureka Road Taylor, MI 48180
Phone: 734-287-3664

V.

DEFENDANTS:
The Unknown Heirs, Devisees, and Assigns of Otto Krueger

TO THE ABOVE NAMED-DEFENDANTS
IT IS ORDERED:
1. You are being sued in this court by the plaintiff to terminate ownership interests in the 1978 Holly Park Manufactured Home (VIN 6027388) and declare manufactured home abandoned. You must file your answer or take other action permitted by law in this court at the court address above on or before 28 days from the date of last service. If you fail to do so, a default judgment may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint filed in this case.
2. A copy of this order shall be published once each week in THE DOWAGIAC DAILY NEWS (LEADER PUBLICATIONS) for three consecutive weeks, and proof of publication shall be filed in this court.
3. shall post a copy of this order in the courthouse, and at 69425 M-62, Lot # 2, Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112 (Site of Manufactured Home).
4. A copy of this order shall be sent to THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS at the last-known address by registered mail, return receipt requested, before the date of last publication, and the affidavit of mailing shall be filed with this court.

Hon. Mark A. Herman (P34735)
JUDGE
DATE 11/18/2025

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BERRIEN COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-0834-DE-J
Hon. Paul S. Jancha

Estate of STEPHEN RUSSELL KELLEY
Date of Birth: September 20, 1953

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, STEPHEN RUSSEL KELLEY, died June 24, 2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against estate will be forever barred unless presented to JEROMY S. KELLEY and/or RACHAEL K. HOKE, Co-Personal Representatives, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, Floor 4, St. Joseph, MI 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Attorney Name:
James J. Mollison, P17884
4 South Lincoln Avenue
Niles, MI 49120
269-684-7600 Cell 269-930-4170

Date: December 13, 2025

Personal Representatives:
Jeromy S. Kelley
5100 Little Paw Paw Lake Rd.
Coloma, MI 49038
574-386-6182

Rachael K. Hoke
1939 River Bluff Rd
Niles, MI 49120
574-386-6283

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF BERRIEN

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE AND CREDITORS NOTICE

FILE NO 2025-0912-DE-J

ESTATE OF ELAINE ESTRID METZGER
Date of Birth: May 20, 1953

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including creditors and heirs of the deceased whose address(es) are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

Be advised that a Petition for Determination of Heirs has been filed with the Court and a hearing on said Petition will be held on February 10, 2026 at 9:15 A.M. via Zoom through the Berrien County Court House, 811 Port Street, Niles, Michigan 49120

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The Decedent, Elaine Estrid Metzger, who lived at 501 North State Street, Niles, Michigan, died July 20, 2025.

Creditors of the Decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Daniel Metzger, named personal representative, or to the probate court at 811 Port Street, Saint Joseph, Michigan 49085 and the named personal representative within four (4) months after the date of publication of this notice.

December 13, 2025

Robert L. Landgraf, Jr. (P23000)
Attorney
Post Office Box 1310
Niles, Michigan 49120
(269) 683 - 8300

Daniel Metzger
Petitioner
c/o Post Office Box 1310
Niles, Michigan 49120-1310

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE
RE: Sale by Online Auction of Contents of Self-Storage Unit
To all interested persons, including, Carlton Cunningham, Connie Cunningham, and Judy Cunningham:
Take Notice:
The Contents of Storage Unit #25, located at Diamond Lake Self Storage, 22954 Diamond Cove Road, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031, will be sold via online auction, beginning December 23, 2025, at 12:00 a.m. through January 6, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., on storagetreasures.com. Items to be sold include, a motorcycle helmet, finishing carpentry items, hinges, clasps, gun related items, industrial sprayer, fishing equipment, plates, trolling motor, Christmas decorations, cabinets, and a Grill Pro smoker.

White Space Sells

0900 LEGALS

SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP
MASTER PLAN

COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that, pursuant to MCL 125.3841, the draft Silver Creek Township Master Plan will be available for viewing by the general public, and that a public hearing will be held on the plan.

The plan will be available at Silver Creek Township Hall (32764 Dixon Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047) and at silvercreektwpmi.gov from December 12, 2025, to February 13, 2025.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on **March 18, 2026**, at 6:30 pm at Silver Creek Township Hall (32764 Dixon Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047).

Written comments on the proposed Master Plan can be submitted through a comment portal on silvercreektwpmi.gov, or by mail to Silver Creek Township Hall, 32764 Dixon Street, PO Box 464, Dowagiac, MI 49047.

Ben Schilling, Planning Commission Chair

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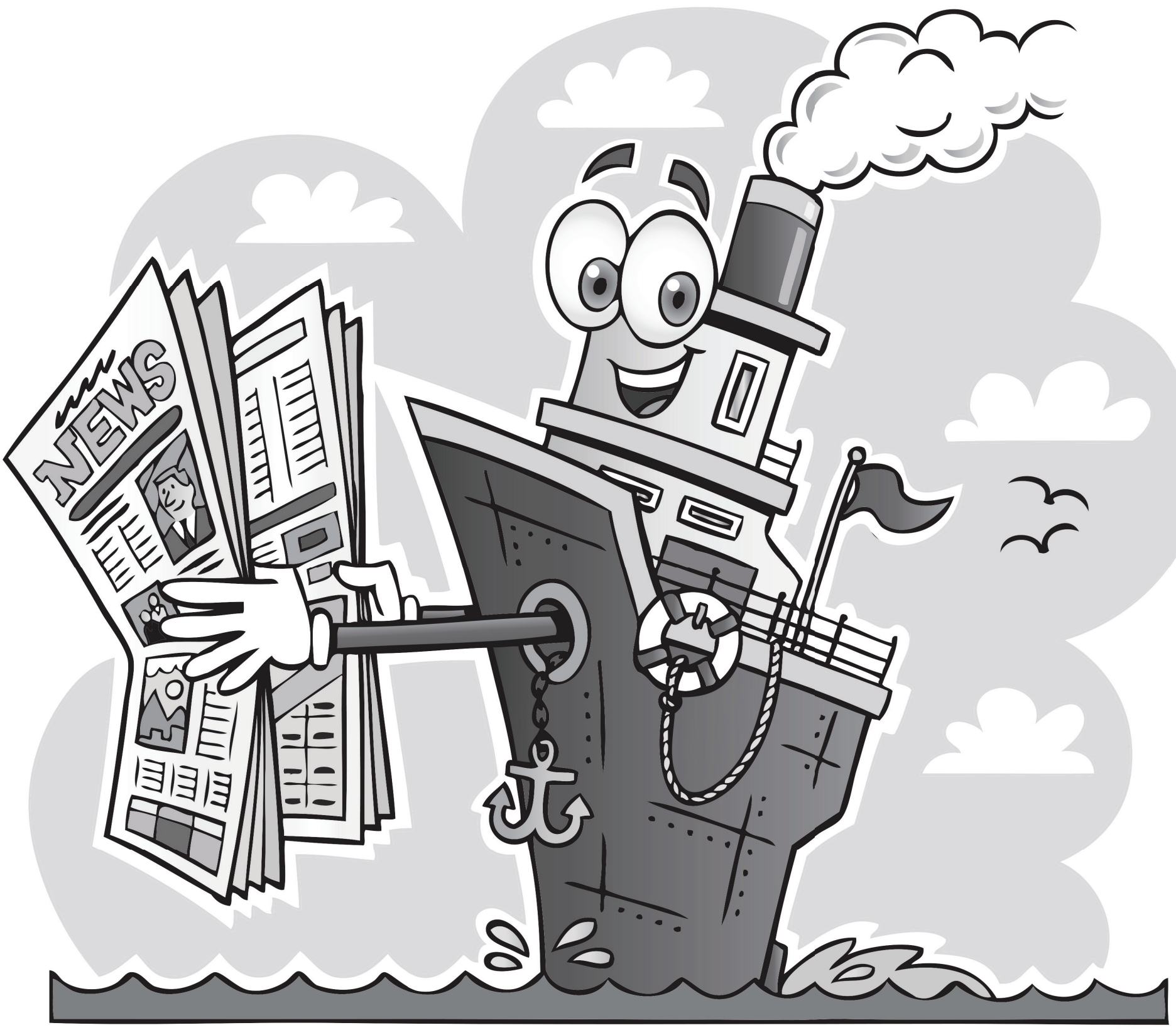

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OUTDOORS

Submitting hunting or fishing photos

Have a behemoth buck, a tremendous turkey or super-sized salmon? Please submit photos to sports@TheHP.com.

Your photo must be in focus, all persons in the photo must be identified, and the general location of the hunt must be provided (for example, 10-point buck shot in Benton Township, black bear shot near Munising, Mich., etc.)

Photo provided / Don Estep

A drake surf scoter on Nov. 17 at New Buffalo Harbor, holding an invasive quagga mussel in its mouth.

Surf scoter a colorful sight

One of the most striking sea ducks is the drake (male) surf scoter. In November, Don Estep of LaPorte captured some nice images of this bird at the New Buffalo Harbor.

Surf scoters are sea ducks that are not often seen close to shore. They usually stay well offshore, too far for the naked eye or even good spotting scopes to see the intricate detail of their colorful bills. While most surf scoters migrate offshore of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts in North America, a smaller portion migrates through the Great Lakes.

Jonathan Wuepper
Southwest Michigan Wildlife

Surf scoters spend their summers nesting in tundra and boreal forests, always near water, in Alaska and across central Canada. In winter, they spend time off the Pacific and Atlantic coasts from Canada south to Baja California and the Gulf coast.

A few surf scoters stay the winter out in the Great Lakes, especially at the southern end of Lake Michigan. The species is seen from time to time on the Great Lakes during Christmas Bird Count censuses.

During autumn migration, surf scoters generally appear off Southwest Michigan by mid-October and through December. In the spring, northbound surf scoters are reported by February and March through April. Occasionally one will be reported locally in May.

During spells of exceedingly cold weather, surf scoters may be seen at the mouths of rivers that remain unfrozen.

Perhaps most unusual is when a surf scoter is found on an inland body of water away from the Great Lakes. I can recall seeing a drake surf scoter on Smith Lake in Berrien County in the month of May about 20 years ago, but have not seen that species inland at any other time.

Photo provided / Don Estep

A snowy owl on Nov. 14 at the break wall at New Buffalo Harbor.

The bird in Estep's photo has a quagga mussel in its bill, which it is about to consume. The quagga mussel is said to be native to the Black Sea. It spread to Western Europe during the 1940s. It first appeared in the Great Lakes on Lake Erie in 1989. In 2021, studies found densities of quagga mussels in Lake Michigan of over 10,000 per square meter, wreaking havoc on the natural ecosystems of the Great Lakes.

On Nov. 14, a snowy owl perched on what appears to be radar equipment on the south break wall at New Buffalo Harbor. Donald Estep captured some nice images of this Arctic visitor. While this owl was seen only one day, it was part of a seemingly small snowy owl movement through Southwest Michigan and northwest Indiana. Additional snowy owls were reported at Berrien Springs on Nov. 14 and at Dayton Wet Prairie in Bertrand Township on Nov. 12.

Snowy owls appear in Southwest Michigan on a regular basis, although their numbers vary each winter. Look for snowy owls from October through March in places that resemble their summer homes of flat tundra. Such places include large, open fields, beaches, and airport runways.

On average, snowy owls make an appearance in Berrien County by late November. Most snowy owls depart Michigan in February and March. Occasionally they are seen locally in April, rarely into May.

Brad Anderson of Bridgman witnessed a flock of several hundred sandhill cranes on Nov. 19, along Oak Grove Road in LaGrange Township, Cass County, of which two were photographed. This area hosts thousands of sandhill cranes each fall.

Jonathan Wuepper is an area naturalist. Report your sightings to him at wuepperj@gmail.com

Photo provided / Brad Anderson

Sandhill cranes on Nov. 19 along Oak Grove Road in LaGrange Township, between Dowagiac and Cassopolis.

Sarett Nature Center

Sarett Nature Stewards: 2-4 p.m. each Wednesday. This program is a way to experience Sarett in a whole different way. By being a nature steward you are helping Sarett but you also gain a sense of well-being. Sarett's crew will teach you many different skills such as collecting viable seeds for future planting, how to identify invasive species from native ones, removing invasive plants, and more. For ages 10 and older.

Audubon Christmas Bird Count: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Dec. 30. Sarett is looking for volunteers to count birds as a part of Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count event to create a census of birds. Volunteers will cover a portion of the official count area and drive around to tally up all the birds they see. To volunteer, please call (269) 927-4832 ext. 102 or email Mike at mikem@sarett.org.

Warren Dunes State Park

Volunteer Stewardship Work Days: 10 a.m.-noon Dec. 13. Meet at the trailhead parking lot by the park headquarters. Volunteers are needed to help remove resprouting woody invasive species in the forests of Warren Dunes State Park. Volunteers will be trained to identify target species, with all equipment provided. Long pants, long shirts and closed-toed shoes are highly recommended.

Email info for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com, or call 429-1294 by Monday.

A cold start to winter follows a very warm fall; how are Illinois seasons changing?

By ADRIANA PÉREZ
Chicago Tribune (TNS)

CHICAGO — After years of little snow across the Chicago area, recent record-breaking snowfall and below-freezing temperatures might seem to contradict scientific reports of winters getting warmer. But climate change is still transforming how locals experience the changing seasons, including this fall, one of the top 10 warmest recorded in Illinois.

"People are like, 'Oh, look at this snow. It's not climate change,'" said Trent Ford, the Illinois climatologist.

But trends in recent decades point to an overall warming of average temperatures in winter as well as fall, spring and summer, from human activities such as fossil-fuel burning that release heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere. And that overall warming doesn't rule out some occasional outliers, including the extreme cold this week.

"Winter is, in fact, starting later as well," Ford said, even if cold and snow this year might seemingly point to the contrary.

When thinking about climate change's impact on seasons, he said, "We talk about the winter a lot – winter warming – and certainly we talk about more summer heat, things like that. Fall is sort of forgotten about. What's really interesting is that all seasons, all months, are warming."

In Chicago, fall is the second fastest-warming season after winter, according to climate science nonprofit Climate Central. Preliminary reports from weather stations across Illinois show statewide average temperatures this fall were 2.5 to 3 degrees above normal, Ford said.

This might only translate to the difference between buying an ice-cold apple cider – instead of a more seasonally appropriate hot version – on a summer-like fall day at a farmer's market.

An analysis from Climate Central found that Chicago is experiencing 13 more fall days with higher-than-normal temperatures compared with 1970, while average autumn temperatures have increased by 2.6 degrees in that same time span.

The unpredictability of snow

As winters rapidly warm up, it doesn't necessarily mean less snow – just like more snow than normal does not necessarily mean winters aren't warming up.

At 12.3 inches, accumulation totals in Chicago this snow season – tracked from July through the following June – are quickly catching up to the 17.6 inches that fell during the entirety of last season. These totals also seem to be following a similar trend from the 1978-1979 season, which ended up being the snowiest recorded in the area with a total of 89.7 inches.

"It was remarkably not snowy for a long time," Ford said, referring to low accumulation totals in recent years. "So this is definitely a contrast."

Still, it's hard to tell how much snow the rest of the winter holds, as "snow does not behave in a simple way."

Senior NWS Chicago meteorologist Gino Izzi said making snowfall predictions is "tricky, unfortunately."

It's hard to establish a direct correlation between early snow activity yielding more snowfall over the course of winter and toward the end of the season. However, seasonal meteorological outlook reports have indicated a potential for a more active winter.

"The ingredients for snow are cold air – cold enough to make snow instead of rain – and disturbances, so storm systems moving through," Ford said.

The current pattern of La Niña – a climate phenomenon of colder-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean expected to persist through most of the Northern Hemisphere's winter – tends to plunge northern Illinois into colder-than-normal temperatures and create more storm systems moving through the Ohio Valley that can bring winter weather for much of Illinois, Ford said.

"The range of possibilities is pretty significant," Izzi said. "Certainly, we've had winters with similar patterns that have been relatively dry, but more often than not, a pattern like we've got coming up this winter tends to feature a little bit more in the way of precipitation. Now, more precipitation doesn't necessarily mean more snowfall. It kind of depends on which side of the storm track we end up on."

Another factor that could yield more snow is a warmer-than-normal Lake Michigan for this time of the year, at least until the lake freezes over.

As cold air moves across the open, warm water of the Great Lakes, it picks up heat and moisture. Now less dense, the air then rises, cools and condenses into clouds, which produce heavy snow in narrow bands downwind.

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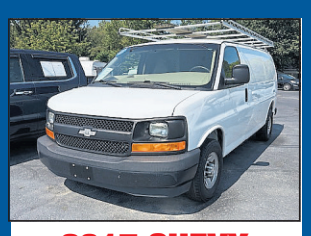

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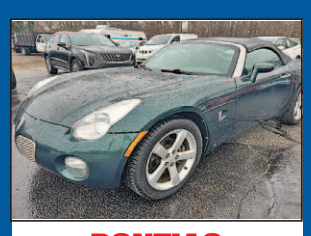

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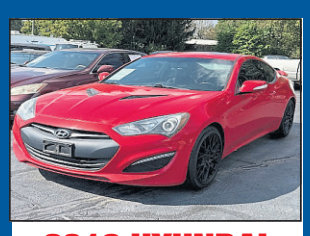

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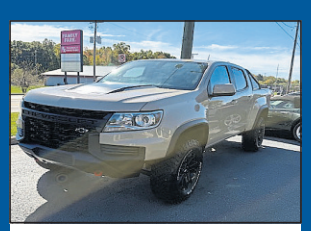

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